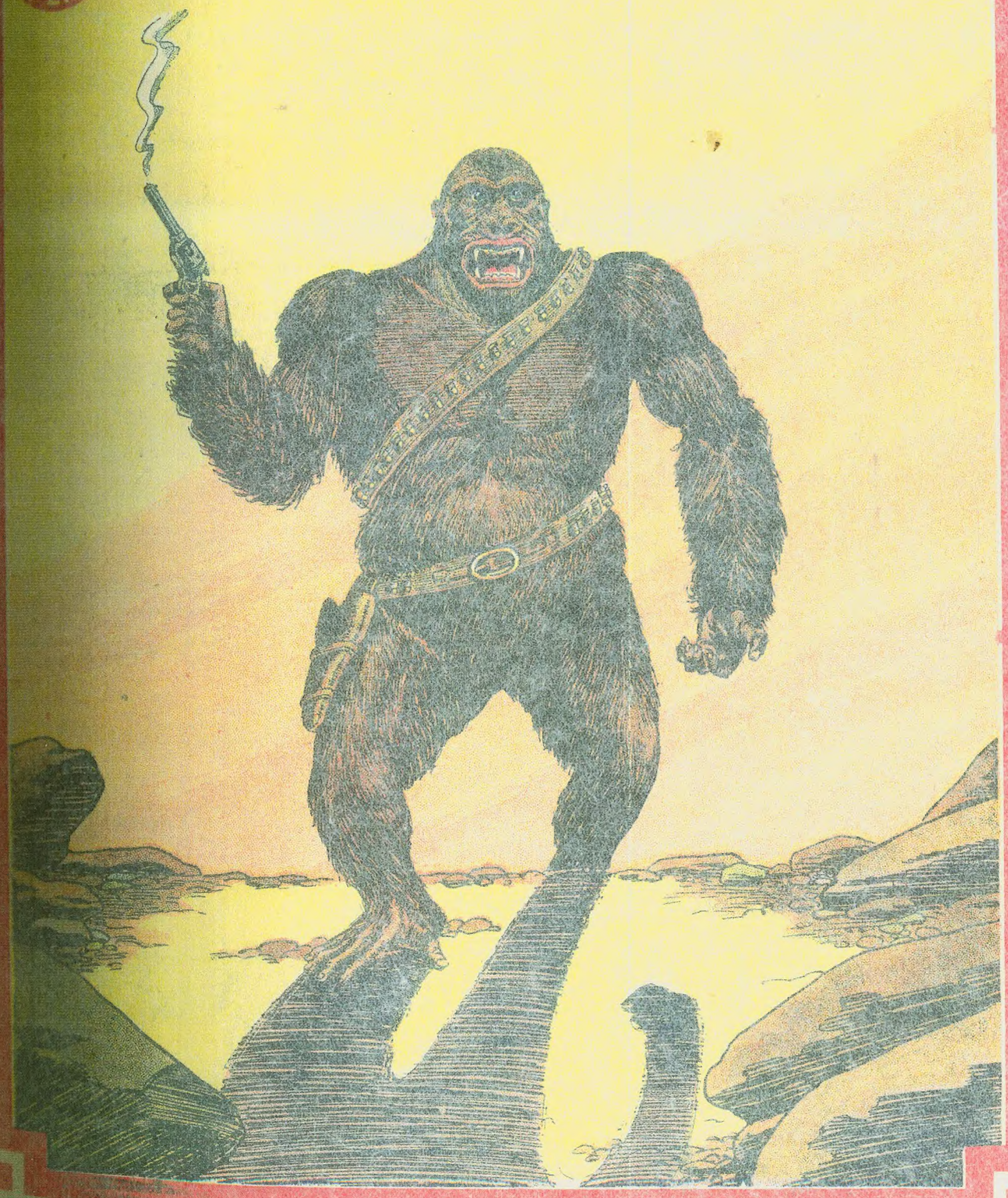
TWO Great Free Gifts Inside For YOU!

THE WIZARD

No 850
MAR 18th 1939
PRICE 2d



STARTING TO-DAY— THE VENGEANCE TRAIL OF THE MOST AMAZING GUNMAN THE WEST HAS EVER KNOWN!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Masters Decides to Quit

BART MASTERS threw down his pick with a grunt of relief. The sun had sunk so low in the sky that it was almost dark now at the bottom of the mineshaft.

Stretching his weary back, he muttered grimly—

"Gettin' old, I reckon. Time I got out o' this."

It was not the first time lately that Bart Masters had thought of quitting the little gold-mine in which he had worked for the past seven years. Sixty-two years of age, bent and scarred by a life-time of toil, if he was ever going to get any enjoyment from the gold which he had torn from the earth, he would soon have to head for more civilised parts.

He had all the gold he wanted, about ten thousand pounds' worth, more than sufficient to set him up in comfort for the rest of his life.

In small leather sacks under the floor of his cabin this gold was hidden, stored ounce by ounce, grain by grain, as he had dug it from the ground. No one had ever worked harder than this lone miner in the Boulder Hills of Colorado.

Twice a year only did he visit the nearest township, for stores and clothing. For the rest of the year he stuck to his mine.

"I'll get out to-morrow," he said.

Dangling down the shaft from forty feet above was a stout rope, and on the end of this a large bucket. It had been used to haul hundreds of tons of earth and ore to the top. Now Bart Masters put one foot in it, gripped the rope above his head, and bellowed—

"Hoist her up, O'Neil!"

There was a clanking somewhere above, and the rope began to be hauled in. Swiftly and steadily the bucket rose, almost as though it was attached to a winch.

In a few moments the head of the old miner came above the surface. He reached out to grasp a cross-piece, and heaved himself to safety.

"Thanks, O'Neil!" he grunted.

He was not a bit surprised to see what had hauled him up. It was a gorilla, a tremendous creature, standing well over six feet high, with a vast sixty-four-inch chest, a shaggy red brown coat, and a face as hideous as a nightmare.

Standing astride the edge of the shaft, it had hauled the rope in hand over hand, and was now carefully coiling it for use on the morrow. It seemed to know exactly what was expected of it.

It was a strange place in which to find a gorilla. Gorillas come from Central Africa, and this was the wilds of Colorado, but its surroundings did not seem to have affected its health. If ever there was a gorilla in the prime of condition, it was this one.

Turning, it came waddling towards its master, walking on its hind-legs, its hands only occasionally touching the ground to steady it. Masters looked at it almost with affection, and handed over the leather poke in which he had packed that day's find of gold.

"Here you are, O'Neil, this is the last," he said. "To-morrow we're gettin' out. What'll you say to new surroundings, new faces, new food? I wonder how you'll settle down in a town, or whether they'll refuse to have you? Guess they'll have to put up with you, pard, if I pay 'em!"

The gorilla growled in its throat. It was almost as though it understood what was being said.

Bart Masters had got into the habit of talking to it. It had helped him forget his loneliness, and he had to admit that no human partner would ever have served him as well as O'Neil, the gorilla.

Eight years ago he had purchased the gorilla, then a youngster, from a sailor in San Francisco. The young animal had then just arrived from Africa, and was both frightened and fierce.

The sailor had been glad to get rid of it. The gorilla had no name, but as the sailor had been called O'Neil, the gold-miner had called it that. O'Neil it had remained ever since, and in course of time it had become utterly devoted to the miner.

Up on the Dragonfly Mine, which Bart Masters had discovered and worked alone, the gorilla had been as good as a hired labourer to him. To train it and make a companion of it had been his only amusement. Not only did it regularly haul the buckets to the top of the shaft, but he had taught it to dig with pick and shovel.

Nearby was the shack where they lived. Built of logs, with a stove-pipe chimney in one corner, it was no different from a hundred other shacks dotted about Colorado.

To Bart Masters it was home. Followed by the shuffling gorilla, he entered the building, and stoked up the fire.

"More firewood, O'Neil!" he said, and the great beast shuffled away to a nearby wood-pile, returning with a load of branches and logs.

Some of the pieces were too large for the stove. The gorilla broke these in two with its powerful hands, or split them by inserting its finger-tips and wrenching them apart. Just how strong O'Neil was his owner had never found out.

"Well, to-night's the last night!" said the old miner, as he mixed flour and water for flapjacks. "To-morrow we head south. In three days we'll be in Colorado Springs, an' a new life will have begun. Reckon you'll have to carry the gold for me. It'll be mighty heavy."

The gorilla snorted, and squatted down in a corner like an old, old man, its knuckles resting on the floor. It knew full well that its supper would be served as soon as its master's.

Before long they were eating their meal, and as they munched away the miner kept up a running fire of comments. He told O'Neil all his plans, his hopes, his fears, and the gorilla sensed that something unusual was going to happen. It watched him with bright, affectionate eyes.

Supper over, Bart Masters dragged back the heavy log table, prised up three planks which had been underneath it, and revealed a hole under the shack. It was his safe.

From it he lifted bag after bag of gold. Each of them was packed to the brim with the gold dust and nuggets which he had extracted from the mine.

The gorilla seemed to have gone to sleep. It kept its eyes closed. Bart Masters ranged his hoard upon the table, and looked around for some means of bundling it all together.

He decided that a doubled blanket would make a good carrier. He stacked the gold-bags on this, in readiness to be rolled up in the morning.

By that time it was quite dark, and he had lighted two candles.

"Time we hit the blankets, O'Neil!" he muttered, and went to the corner where the giant gorilla dozed.

It raised no objection when he fastened a stout leather collar round its neck. To the collar was attached a chain which was embedded in the corner beam of the hut.

There was plenty of slack to the chain. It did not prevent O'Neil from curling up and sleeping. Bart Masters scarcely knew why he continued to chain the gorilla up at night. It was a relic of the old days, when he had not been quite certain of the way the gorilla would behave during the night.

"Good night, O'Neil. To-morrow night we'll be in camp, an' before long maybe I'll be able to buy ye some real fruit," he said, as he climbed into his bunk.

The last thing he did was to reach up and assure himself that his gun-belt hung on the usual nail above his head, with his heavy six-gun ready loaded.

Worn out with the toil of the day, he was soon asleep. The gorilla snored heavily. A clock ticked on a shelf in the corner.

The moon came through a haze of cloud. It was not very bright, but enough to throw a faint shadow on the window when someone approached outside.

Another shadow followed, then another, and yet a fourth. Four men were creeping towards the door of the shack.

The faces of these men were twisted viciously as they strained their eyes for the slightest sound of movement within. All of them were obviously tough characters and each was armed with two guns.

"The old un's asleep!" hissed one fellow with a drooping moustache. "Wonder what's happened to the gorilla?"

"Sleeping as well, I guess," murmured one of the others. "He chains it up at nights. I've seen him call it in."

The men were not strangers to the locality. For more than a week they had spied on Bart Masters, observing his every movement, trying to judge whether he was worth robbing or not.

In other parts of Colorado they were known as the Strawhan Gang, and they were wanted by the law for a score of murders and robberies. The north of Colorado had proved too hot for them, and they had come south. It was unlucky for Bart Masters that they had stumbled upon his retreat, and had seen him washing out some gold dust one night.

To them the temptation was irresistible. This was the night on which they had decided to rob him.

Tutt Strawhan, the man with the red moustache, lifted the latch of the door softly. It was not fastened in any way. Bart Masters never believed in locking himself in at night.

Inch by inch the door opened, and the evil face of the leader of the gang peered round the edge.

The moon from the window shone upon the figure in the bunk. The old miner was twitching in his sleep.

In the further corner of the room a dark blur marked the position of the gorilla. It did not stir. Its sleep was not disturbed.

Tutt Strawhan lifted a finger to his lips to warn his men to keep quiet. Softly he tip-toed forward.

Half-way across the shack he was when O'Neil opened his eyes, blinked at the intruder and lurched to his feet with a roar.

Crack-crack! Strawhan had the name of being one of the quickest shots in the West. He wasted no time in firing twice at the infuriated gorilla. Even before it had come

NEXT WEEK'S "BATTLES FOR THE FLAG" PICTURE

THE LAST STAND OF L. BATTERY AT MONS

L. Battery of The Royal Horse Artillery was taking guns up to the front in August 1914 at the start of the Great War.

Suddenly out of nowhere came thundering German shells. They created havoc in the British camp. Horses, men, and guns were blown to smithereens.

Only seven men escaped death and only one gun was left for them to work. One British gun against eight German guns—it looked hopeless odds!

This thrilling fight, drawn by the famous artist, F. Matania, will appear in full colour on

Battle Picture No. 2

which will be given

Free Next Tuesday

Buy "The Wizard" and "The Rover" every week and obtain the full set of "Battles for the Flag" pictures. You get "The Rover" Battle Picture No. 2.

THE ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS

(The Thin Red Line at Balaclava)

FREE on THURSDAY!

to the end of its chain one of the bullets had caught it on the head, and spun it round.

It collapsed on the floor, and lay still.

The report had roused Bart Masters with a jerk. His gnarled hand reached for the gun hanging on the wall.

"No you don't!" barked one of the gang from the doorway, and another shot rang out, shattering the miner's wrist. "Sit back an' keep still."

The four of them crowded forward, Tutt Strawhan, Pete Stark, Jim Lane, and El Vado, the half-breed. The latter held an ugly knife. He was an expert knife-man.

O'Neil's Vengeance Vow

"WHAT do you want?" croaked old Bart Masters, though he already knew.

"Your gold!" snarled Strawhan. "Don't try to stall us, Masters. We've seen you bring gold in here. Where is it hidden? If you want to save your skin hand it over."

Instinctively the miner's eyes flickered to the table where the blanket loosely covered the bags of gold. His lips moved, but no words came from them. He was trying to think of a way out of this terrible position, and he could see none. Even O'Neil was out of action, if not dead.

A moment later the old miner wished he had not glanced that way, for Pete Stark, guessing the meaning of that glance, sprang towards the table.

"Holy smoke!" he gasped, jerking back the corner of the blanket. "Here's all his hoard. We're rich men. This must be all the gold he's dug out in years!"

All the gang turned that way, and again Bart Masters snatched for the gun-belt over his head. He succeeded in gripping it, and jerked it from the nail, but before he could draw the gun from its holster he was again menaced by Strawhan's gun.

"Didn't I tell you to keep your hands off that gun-belt?" roared the leader of the gang, and he pulled the trigger of his gun three times.

Three bullets thudded into Bart Master's body. Two of them found his heart. He fell back limp and lifeless on the bunk.

As the smoke cleared away the ruffians crowded round the gold.

"The old fool must have been meaning to clear out," grinned one of them. "We came just in time. If we'd waited another night it might have been too late."

Quickly they divided the store of gold for carrying, and when they staggered from the shack some five minutes later they were all heavily laden.

That there was plenty more gold in the mine did not worry them. They were not interested in mining. Robbery with violence was more in their line.

Time passed, and the old clock on the shelf ticked away steadily. No movement came from the bunk, where the blankets were stained deeply with blood.

Presently a board creaked under the gorilla. The great beast was stirring. Its lips moved, then its eyes. Fiercely it gazed at the roof of the shack, unable to recollect where it was. There was a blinding pain in its head, and it moaned slightly as it stirred.

Blood had trickled under one ear, and caked there in the hair. The second of the bullets fired at the gorilla had 'creased' it, bringing unconsciousness, but not death.

The gorilla sat up, and its chain creaked. There was a strange scent in its nostrils, the scent of warm blood. A low growl came from its parted lips.

The moon shone upon its hideous face, now twisted with rage and fear. The growl changed to a plaintive whine. It was calling to its master.

In the past years, whenever unwise eating had given it pains in its stomach, this whine had brought Bart Masters to its side with effective remedies. Something was wrong now, but O'Neil did not know what it was. He decided to call his master.

There was no reply. From where the gorilla crouched it could see the miner sprawled on the bunk. One of his hands hung down over the side in unnatural fashion. The gorilla began to sense that something was wrong.

What had happened to its beloved master? It rose to its feet, its head almost touching the roof of the room, and shuffled forward.

There was a jerk at its neck as the chain pulled it up, and the growl changed to one of anger. The smell of blood was angering and alarming the great beast. It gave a tremendous tug at the chain and the shack shook.

Bart Masters had chained the beast up each night, but had forgotten how it had increased in strength since those early days when this had been necessary. No such chain could now hold it.

Enraged still further by the resistance, O'Neil leaned forward, grasped the chain with both hands behind his head, and heaved.

There was a splintering crash. The roof

began to sink at one end. The gorilla had pulled the corner post completely out of the ground, and now towed it forward across the room, in spite of the fact that several logs and planks were still fixed to it.

A moment later it was beside the bunk, bending over its master, sniffing him, nuzzling him, moaning and crying with terror when it found what had happened.

No child could have sorrowed more. The gorilla pushed Masters and poked him, hoping that he would come back to life, but that was impossible.

Then the gorilla's sorrow changed to rage. It bellowed and roared in a way which would have roused the beasts in an African jungle.

Again and again it roared, beating its chest with its clenched hands, snatching at articles of furniture and tearing them to matchwood.

As it thrashed about the room the chain and the logs attached to it went with the gorilla. The noise behind it maddened it still further.

But every now and again it would go to its master's side and sprawl over him, whimpering and moaning. Only the coming of daylight through the window quietened it. It ceased to howl and roar, and went down on all fours, sniffing the floor.

To and fro it went, like a dog picking up the scent. Once it snatched up some articles, an old empty tobacco-pouch, a dirty handkerchief, a piece of rag. All these things had been discarded by the four killers when they had been making room in their pockets for the sacks of gold.

O'Neil seemed to know that these articles, and the scents attached to them, belonged to those men who had slain his master. His hair bristled, his eyes flamed with fury, and his clenched fingers dug into his huge palms.

Again and again he raised his head and growled. He was vowing vengeance. In his savage way he was connecting these scents with his master's death. He knew that these men had killed his master.

Once he went outside the door, and followed the tell-tale scent across the clearing as far as the beginning of the trail to the west. But he did not go very far. Waddling with ungainly strides, he returned to the shack, and his keen eyes noticed something on which his dead master was half-lying.

It was the revolver-belt and gun-holster. The six-shooter was as yet undrawn.

A strange expression came to O'Neil's eyes. He pulled the gun out and examined it. It was not the first time he had handled it. He knew all about this strange toy of his master.

Furthermore, he knew how to use it. In his spare time Bart Masters had delighted in teaching O'Neil unusual tricks. He had shown him how to hold the gun, point it and fire. He had even shown him how to load it with those little metal things called cartridges.

To the broken-hearted O'Neil this gun and belt seemed part of his master, and he decided to take them with him.

He tried to put the belt around his massive waist, but it was too tight. Bart Masters had been a bulky man, but not as bulky as the gorilla.

Even then O'Neil was not beaten. He seated himself on his haunches and fiddled with the belt. Once or twice his master had strapped it about his strange friend. There must be some way of making it larger.

At last O'Neil found the buckle, and opened the belt out to its fullest length. Then it buckled round the gorilla's waist easily, so that the heavy six-gun hung on his right side.

O'Neil had never been more proud than when his master had dressed him up like this. Even now the gorilla could not resist swaggering up and down the clearing outside.

Then O'Neil remembered something else. When he and the miner had gone into the woods on shooting expeditions, his master had worn a bandolier. It was on the shelf beside the clock, filled with cartridges.

O'Neil fetched it, and with an effort, got it over his own shoulder. It fitted too high under the armpit, but that did not matter to O'Neil. The bandolier was part of his master, smelled like his master, and the gorilla knew that the little shiny metal things in it were for the gun.

Thus equipped, O'Neil prowled up and down the clearing until the sun was high. The sun gleamed on something amongst the bushes at the other end of the open space, and the gorilla remembered what it was.

The miner had set up a tin as a target for practice. He had encouraged O'Neil to shoot at that tin from a distance.

Clumsily, for his fingers were too big for a gun that size, O'Neil drew the revolver from the holster, and aimed at the tin on the bush.

His forefinger fumbled some seconds for the trigger. Only the merest tip of his finger could go under the trigger-guard, but that was enough to enable him to pull the trigger.

Bang! The bullet went wide. The gorilla could fire a revolver, and had been trained not to jump at the noise, but the beast was no crackshot.

O'Neil's eyes gleamed. His lower lips pouted with determination, and he fired again and again.

At the fourth shot there was a clatter, and the tin jumped in the air. He had scored a hit at last.

Then the gorilla hooted with joy, bouncing up and down on its hind-legs as though it had gone mad. Always when it had scored a hit there had been a special dainty given it by its master. Instinctively it turned, expecting the tit-bit, only to be faced with the bloodstained figure on the bunk.

The joy died from O'Neil's eyes. The growl in his throat sounded more fearsome than ever.

He squatted on the doorstep, fumbled with the bandolier, and drew out cartridges. He knew how to open the gun and empty out the old cases. Now he proceeded to reload.

It was a long process for O'Neil. Sometimes he tried to push the wrong end of the bullets into the chambers, but at last he had the gun fully loaded and he restored it to the holster.

A strange grimness seemed to possess him. Tucked in his belt was the soiled handkerchief that he had picked up from the floor of the cabin. His nostrils dilated as he sniffed at it, then he turned suddenly towards the west, and hurried up the trail which the four killers had taken.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had started on its journey of vengeance. A new terror was loose!

Strawhan's Terrible Tracker

THE Strawhan gang had been mounted on horses. They had ridden away at full speed from Bart Masters' shack, the gold stowed in their saddle-bags, and they had made top speed over the ranges.

O'Neil had to rely on his own efforts to get him along, but he travelled much faster than a man could have done on foot. Here and there he took short-cuts up the mountainside.

To see him coming up the trail, balancing himself ponderously on his hind-legs, the gun swinging on his hip, the bandolier tight around his chest and shoulder, would have been a terrifying shock to anyone. But there was no one to see. Few men travelled in those parts. The district had a bad name, for it was not very far from Muddy Creek, where there was a saloon and a handful of shacks.

At Muddy Creek the badmen of the district met to swap stories, play poker, and discuss their forthcoming jobs. Decent citizens gave the place a wide berth.

The Strawhan gang had gone there, and they had had a long start on the gorilla, but that did not worry O'Neil.

Over the range and down the other side scrambled the Six-Gun Gorilla.

At the foot of the further slope there was a river, swift and dangerous. In one place boulders had been rolled in to form a ford, but O'Neil did not understand fords. He hated getting his feet wet.

On both sides of the river grew trees with outstretched branches, and the gorilla reached into one of these. Almost without effort, it hauled itself on to a high, springy branch, and climbed out over the water's edge.

Its tremendous weight, over six hundred pounds, made the branch bend. O'Neil did not mind. Gripping with his feet as well as with his hands, he teetered up and down until he was whipping through the air like something on the end of a spring.

Timing it perfectly, he released his hold at the right moment, and hurled himself across the river. The springiness of the branch gave added length to his leap. His outstretched hands caught a branch on the other side, and although the branch broke under his suddenly-applied weight, he had accomplished what he wished to do. He had crossed the river.

On he went, and presently, on the right, he saw a lone log building. It was a settler's cabin, and smoke was curling from it. O'Neil headed that way to investigate.

The sound of wood being chopped guided him round the corner of a shed. A man who had his back towards O'Neil was splitting logs with a heavy axe. O'Neil remembered that he knew how to do that. His master had shown him how to perform this useful service, but had given it up when he had discovered that the gorilla could just as well split the logs apart with his fingers.

"Ugh!" grunted the interested gorilla, and the man at the logs turned suddenly.

Just for a moment he found himself staring at the hideous face of O'Neil. The gorilla's eyes were on him; its lips were apart. The

TO STAMP COLLECTORS

Closely-set Advertisements will be inserted in WIZARD under above heading at the prepaid rate of 3d per word per insertion. Spaced Advertisements 25/- per inch per insertion.

FREE.—400 stamps. Request approvals. Postage 2d. M. Parker, 114 Waterloo Rd., Middlesbrough.

MANY rare stamps have been found in the "Diamond" packet, which contains approx. 1000 unsorted stamps from convents abroad. 1s 6d post free. (Abroad 2s 6d.) Beware of imitations. Nerush (Dept. W.), 62 Turnpike Lane, London, N.8.

FREE! 120 different stamps. Request approvals. Banks, 153 Stretford Rd., Urmston, Manchester.

STAMPS.—300 different, including Airmail, beautiful uncommon sets, pictorials, Colonials. You'll be delighted. Price 6d. White, Stamps, Lye, Stourbridge.

JUBILEE Packet Free.—Goliath locomotive, allegory of Latvia, Estonia (blacksmith), Chile (Bulnes), Egypt (Fuad); packet of 50 different, old Turkey, scarce Jubilee. Ask for 50% discount approvals and enclose 2d postage. Robinson Bros. (D), Moreton, Wirral.

12/6 FREE. 38 stamps cataloguing 12/6, including 12 K.G. VI, Jubilees, Coronations, Abyssinia, Congo, Manchukuo, to approval applicants sending 2d. Cockrill, 13 Montrell Rd., London, S.W.2.

FREE!! 12 Jubilees and Coronations. Send 2d Postage. Request Approvals. Mention Paper. Shields & Platt, 29, High Street, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex.

STAMPS free, 60 different, including Coronation Gold Coast, Spanish Morocco, China, etc., to applicants for my famous ½d stamps. Without approvals, 6d. Fleming, 52 Whitchurch Road, Chester.

1938 ISSUES PACKET FREE!

Contains large mint Airmail LIBERIA (Eagle), mint TURKS and CAICOS IS. (Raking Salt), 2 BULGARIA (Sunflower and Harvesting), AFGHANISTAN, brilliant FR. GUINEA (Native Village), ITALIAN E. AFRICA (Gazelle), NIGERIA (K.G. VI.), mint SOMALI COAST (Mosque), large HUNGARY (St Stephen), MONACO, new reign KENYA (Mt. Kilimanjaro), NEW ZEALAND (K.G. VI.) and GREENLAND (the new stamp-issuing country). FREE only to those who ask for approvals and enclose 2d postage and packing (overseas or without approvs. 1/- P.O.).

HELY HUTCHINSON (W.22), Hurrock Wood, Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands, Lancs.

OUTFIT FREE

This extraordinary offer includes 100 Titles of Countries, Perforation Measurer, ALBUM, new Price List, 32 different stamps, including Airmail (Biplane), Stamp Mounts, Stamps from Philippines, Australasians, Hungarians and Czechoslovakians. To the first 500 applicants two large Moroccans (including Duke of Windsor) and two unused COLONIAL issues. Just send 2d postage, requesting approvals. (Airmail postage abroad 6d.)

LISBURN & TOWNSEND (W), Liverpool, 3.

settler had never seen anything more horrible.

He had just time to take in the details of the belt, and the gun, in its holster. Sheer stupefaction held him rigid.

Then the apparition waddled towards him. O'Neil could smell this was not one of the men whom he sought. He wanted to make friends, to shake this man's hand as Bart Masters had taught him to do.

But this was too much for the lone settler. He paused just long enough to hurl the axe at the gorilla, then turned and fled for his shack, where he barricaded himself in and grabbed his gun.

Luckily for the Six-Gun Gorilla the axe missed him, but a few moments later a shot-gun banged from the window of the shack. Some buck-shot stung him.

It did not hurt more than a horse-fly would have done, but it angered and annoyed O'Neil.

He forgot all about the gun at his hip. He grabbed the first thing which came handy. It was half a tree, which the settler had been intending to saw up. It weighed several hundredweights, but thrown by O'Neil's powerful arms it flew through the air with such force that it crashed straight through the roof, into the cabin!

The settler fired no more. Grumbling to himself, the Six-Gun Gorilla returned to the trail. He could not understand the behaviour of these creatures who resembled his master in appearance.

Now he was getting nearer to Muddy Creek. A clatter of hoofs made him draw to one side. A mounted man came galloping round the bend. He was a dark, fierce-looking ruffian, and was heading in the same direction as O'Neil.

At the sight of the gorilla, standing upright beside the trail, the horse suddenly reared, and bolted. The man was thrown into some bushes, and when he scrambled out, the horse was out of sight.

O'Neil was staring in bewilderment. He could not understand what all the fuss was about. The enraged man snarled under his breath.

"Durn you," he growled. "Where did you come from? There's no such things as gorillas in America."

With that he snatched out his gun, and started to open fire, believing that the gorilla would bolt. There was a surprise in store for him. The gorilla thought that this was a challenge to a shooting match. He lugged out his six-shooter, pointed it in the general direction of the man, and pulled the trigger three times.

The man dropped his gun in surprise, felt a bullet whistle close to his ear, and fled.

Shaking his hideous head dolefully at the strange behaviour of men, the Six-Gun Gorilla ambled on his way, dropping from time to time on all fours and sniffing the ground.

His scent was remarkably keen. He knew that the men he sought had passed this way.

His head still ached a little from the bullet-groove on his skull, but it was not enough to make him slacken his speed. It was only dusk, and the sun had no more than dipped behind the mountains, when O'Neil came in sight of Muddy Creek.

He stopped on the hillside, balancing himself with one hand high in a tree. Monstrous he seemed in the fading light, and the gun swinging at his hip seemed more fanciful than ever.

The breeze was coming his way, and his nostrils twitched as he made out the various smells. Tobacco and cooking! O'Neil remembered that he was hungry, but there was something else he had to do before he satisfied his appetite. Among those varied smells he could scent the men he sought.

Snarling, grimacing, he went down the hill on all fours. No one saw him coming. Some horses were tethered outside the door of the saloon, but there were no men in sight. It was the hour when they began to collect at the saloon for the serious business of drinking and card-playing.

O'Neil checked himself as he neared the saloon. He rose on his hind-legs and stalked forward with something resembling dignity. The gun still swung against his leg, and to check the bumping he put one hand on it.

The sound of voices made him twitch his ears. There were quite a number of men in the building already. He made for the door, but it was closed. He changed his mind, and headed for the nearest window.

It was high from the ground, but not too high for O'Neil. Rearing himself to his full height, resting one hand on the edge of the wooden-tiled roof above, he pressed his face to the dirty glass panes which obstructed his view.

The window was very dirty. Grime and smoke had crusted it thickly. Everything O'Neil saw in there was misty and distorted. He blinked his eyes as though blaming them for this.

There were some men lined up at the counter with glasses in their hands. Others were sitting at one or two of the tables, playing cards. Money was clinking. Voices were raised in argument.

At one end of the counter a man with a drooping red moustache was pouring some gold-dust from a narrow sack into a piece of paper which the saloonkeeper was holding for him.

It was Tutt Strawhan, and he was paying for some stores which he had just purchased. Beside him was Pete Stark, with a filled sack of goods. The other two members of the gang were waiting outside the settlement with the horses and the rest of the gold. The scoundrels had decided to push on even further before stopping any considerable time. Only because they had had to buy stores had they come to Muddy Creek.

The Six-Gun Gorilla sniffed. He was trying to scent which of these men were the ones he wanted, but the closed window prevented this. Then, all at once, he sighted Strawhan.

The shaft of moonlight in the cabin at the Dragonfly Mine had revealed this man's face to the gorilla just before it had been stricken down by the bullets. At sight of that face with the drooping red moustache the great beast stiffened.

Its mouth opened as if it were about to roar, but no sound came. Its hand was still clutching the butt of the gun in its holster to steady the weapon. Almost without knowing what he did, O'Neil had drawn the six-shooter.

Great staring eyes were pressed close to the window. Parted lips revealed wicked fangs. If the opening had been bigger the gorilla would have leapt through and settled the matter with its bare hands, but the window was too small.

O'Neil raised the gun, pointed it through the window towards the further end of the counter, and clutched the trigger so fiercely that the gun jerked upwards as he fired.

The shot, the shattering of the window, and the breaking of a bottle behind the bar, all happened quickly. Twenty men whirled as one to see what was happening. Many of them dropped their hands to their guns.

But no gun was drawn. What those men in the saloon at Muddy Creek saw was sufficient to paralyse their arms. They just stared spellbound.

With the smoking gun still in his immense paw, O'Neil had stuck his head through the broken window to glare at the result of his shot. Nothing more horrible than his face could have been imagined.

O'Neil did not need a tin-opener to get at the contents of the tins of fruit. He simply squashed the tins flat with his huge hands.

It was Tutt Strawhan who found his voice first. It rose in a shriek:—

"It can't be true! It can't be true! It's Bart Masters' gorilla. See the chain still hanging from its neck. But it can't be the same gorilla—for it's dead!"

The Stampede of Terror

TUTT STRAWHAN'S cry was drowned in the uproar that followed. A dozen chairs and tables went over as the occupants of the saloon stampeded back from the side of the building nearest the window.

The strange thing was that nobody drew a gun. They were too astonished and bewildered for that. Any ordinary gunman would have been riddled before this, but this monster, nightmare face had surprised them so much that they were too dazed even to go for their guns.

Crack! One of the lamps hanging from the middle of the room fell shattered to the floor. The Six-Gun Gorilla had fired again, just as wildly. He had only one shot left in his gun, but the men in the saloon were not to know that. The stampede away from the window became a rout. The terrified men fled for the door which led to the open.

Their position near the counter made Tutt

Strawhan and his companion amongst the last to pass across the floor on their way to the only exit. O'Neil saw them passing within a dozen feet of him, and seemed to go mad.

He jerked his head outside again, thrust the gun back into its holster, and gripped the window-sill with both hands.

The saloon was solidly built, as far as Western buildings went, but it was not solid enough to stand the terrific strain put upon it by the maddened gorilla. The window-sill came away in the creature's hands, and some of the logs beneath it followed.

With much splintering of woodwork the monster got into the saloon through this improvised door. Tutt Strawhan had just reached the door. The Six-Gun Gorilla leapt down the room after him, and in the doorway the gunman turned to fire at his pursuer.

Such was his nervousness that he missed even at that easy range.

The gorilla came on relentlessly. Even the flash of the revolver did not daunt it. Its terrible eyes were fixed on the face of the man who had killed its master. Tutt Strawhan gave a strangled gasp, wheeled about, and ran for the nearest horse.

Pete Stark was already away down the trail on the first horse he had been able to grab. Some of the other men who had been in the saloon were following his example.

Tutt Strawhan would never have got astride his horse if the door of the saloon had not been too narrow for O'Neil's shoulders. That pulled the gorilla up for a moment.

A mighty shrug, a heave, and the door-posts fell outwards, allowing O'Neil to bound down the steps to where Strawhan had just mounted.

"Get going!" hissed the frightened man, beating the horse with his clenched fist.

O'Neil missed the gangster only by inches. A deafening roar escaped the gorilla as the horse went away after the rest of the panic-stricken riders. For a moment the monster danced with rage.

Suddenly it calmed. Bart Masters' training was coming to the fore. Again it drew the six-shooter, straightened up to its full height, and fired after the fleeing figures.

Crack! The gorilla pulled the trigger five or six times, but only that one shot rang out. There were no more cartridges in the chambers. The gorilla had forgotten to reload.

Puzzled, growling softly to itself, it turned the revolver the other way and looked down the barrel, as though expecting to see some explanation of its failure. The Six-Gun Gorilla was not yet used to firearms. Only time would teach him that he could only fire as many shots as he loaded.

By the time O'Neil had solved this problem, and groped for fresh cartridges in the bandolier, Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark had reached their waiting comrades in the nearby woods, and were gasping out their amazing story of the gorilla with the gun.

As for the storekeeper, and the rest of the inhabitants of Muddy Creek, they were still riding for their lives, or hiding in trees outside the settlement. Terror had come to this meeting-place of gunmen. They had known killers and gunmen of all kinds during the brief history of the place, but never one like Bart Masters' gorilla.

O'Neil seated himself on the step of the store to reload his precious gun. First of all he blew mightily down the barrel, clearing out much of the soot and caked powder. Proper cleaning was beyond his capabilities.

The gun reloaded, and back in the holster, O'Neil went two or three paces down the trail towards the woods before the gnawing pangs of hunger reminded him that he had eaten nothing since the night before.

Back into the store he went. There he had smelt food, and cooking. Sniffing about amongst the fallen chairs and tables, he found a few scraps of food which had fallen to the floor, but that was not a meal for a six-hundred-pound gorilla.

He climbed over the counter, and found a sack of potatoes. These were very welcome. Sitting on the edge of the counter, the Six-Gun Gorilla munched away contentedly, eating raw potatoes as a boy might eat apples. There had been forty pounds of potatoes in the sack when O'Neil had started. When he had finished there was not a single one.

But that satisfied his longing for potatoes. He craved for something sweet. He searched amongst the shelves and boxes at the back of the store, pulling down fittings, turning out sacks and boxes in search of sugar.

He did not find any. It was in a bin which protected it from ants, and O'Neil did not notice this bin.

In his rage he grabbed a tin from the shelf and dashed it to the floor with so much force that it burst open. Juice ran out, and the odour of pineapples drifted to the gorilla's distended nostrils. The tin had contained pineapple chunks.

With his powerful fingers the great beast prised the broken tin apart and ate the contents. That only whetted his appetite for more. He searched for more tins of that kind. There were plenty of them. The storekeeper had bought in a case only a few days previously. Canned pineapples had only recently become known in the West, and, in a district where luxuries were few and far between, they were well liked.

O'Neil certainly liked them. He picked up tin after tin, crushed them between his mighty hands, and flattened the sides inwards, squeezing out the sweet cubes of fruit, which he immediately ate.

Juice poured down his shaggy chest and on to the floor. In all, O'Neil must have eaten about twenty tins of pineapples, but when by accident he burst open tins containing corned beef, he threw these away. O'Neil was no meat eater.

It was almost dark when at last he was satisfied and shambled back into the open. His appetite no longer worried him, but he had not forgotten why he had come there.

He was after the killers of his beloved master. They had escaped him again, but he was not going to give up. He would follow them, to the other side of America if need be, but sooner or later he would come up with them.

Striding clumsily on his hind-legs, the gun swinging, the broken chain dangling, he took the trail which Tutt Strawhan had taken, snuffling the air as though expecting to pick up the scent of his enemies.

Once he heard a creak amongst the branches of a tree, and turned with a growl. A white face peered at him from above. The store-keeper had taken refuge there.

It was too dark to see clearly, and as the man was above the beast, the gorilla did not get his scent. But O'Neil knew that someone was up there. One bound carried him to the foot of the tree, and the storekeeper above shrieked when he saw that he had been discovered.

The storekeeper was clinging to a branch about ten feet from the ground. That did not save him from the gorilla. O'Neil rose to his full height and gave a slight jump. With one hand he clutched the branch, and his weight caused it to snap.

There was a terrible scream from the storekeeper when he felt himself falling, and an even greater scream when he found himself caught in the gorilla's arms.

"Don't! Don't! Mercy!" gasped the terrified man.

O'Neil had him upside down by one leg. He held him at arm's length and sniffed him, comparing the scent of this wriggling, struggling creature with that of the men who had killed his master.

The scent was not one of those he sought. With a deep grunt of disappointment, O'Neil hurled the man from him. The storekeeper landed in some bushes a dozen yards away and lay there sobbing, scarcely able to believe that he was still alive.

Then the Six-Gun Gorilla resumed his trek up the trail. Darkness had closed in on all sides, but that did not check him. Around him the small beasts and birds of the forest were going to sleep, but for O'Neil there was going to be no sleep that night. He was driven forward by that burning longing for vengeance.

The dangling chain clanked on his shoulder. The heavy gun bumped against his shaggy side.

O'Neil heeded neither of these things. His fierce eyes were staring straight ahead. His massive chest heaved faster than usual before he reached the top of the hill, and then he stopped, bending forward, with the knuckles of his hands resting on the ground to steady himself.

Long and earnestly he stared into the darkness.

About a mile ahead he could see a flicker of light. It was a camp-fire. Camp-fires meant men, and men might mean the men he sought.

With a low snarl of satisfaction the Six-Gun Gorilla broke into a run. Once again he steadied the revolver with his huge hairy hand.

When the dreaded Strawhan Gang had robbed and murdered Bart Masters, they had never guessed that such a terrible pursuer would follow unceasingly on their trail!

Tell your pals about this smashing new story, boys—and make sure that "The Last Stand of L Battery at Mons" is inside your copy of "The Wizard."

TELL DAD!

how easy it is to get a Riley "Home" Billiard Table. ONLY 8/- DOWN. Balance Monthly. 7 days' Free Trial.

E. J. RILEY, Ltd., Jervis Works, Accrington, or Dept. 25, 46-47 Newgate Street, London, E.C.1.

WRITE FOR ART LIST.

PIANO ACCORDIONS

BY ALL THE MOST FAMOUS MAKERS from

1/- WEEKLY

Bonelli, Steldeni, Vissimio, Pancotti, Hohner, Crucianelli

£4.4.0 Value for 42/-

Piano Finished Cabinet by Steldeni. Metal bound Bellows, triple Chord Action. Complete with shoulder-strap. 21 Piano Keys, 8 Basses. Cash price 42/-, or 2/- first instalment, balance 4/- monthly until 46/- is paid. Elaborate Tutor. Also Superior De Luxe Model at 52/6, same terms. List of models with 25 Keys, 12 Bass; 25 Keys, 24 Bass; 34 Keys, 46 Bass; 41 Keys, 120 Bass, on terms.

J. A. DAVIS & CO. (Dept. T.B.48), 94-104 Denmark Hill, London, S.E.5.

BOYS SUPER SKATES

Self Guiding, Double Ball Bearing, Adjustable Plate and Toe Clips. Rubber Cushions. Hide Ankle Straps. Strong and Reliable. Pair, .. 4/11

Superior Quality. Special finish. Suitable for Road or Rink. Pair, ... 7/6

SEND FOR LIST.

JAMES GROSE Ltd. 379 EUSTON RD. N.W.1

Do You Collect Cigarette Cards?

IF SO,
GET OUR FREE AND POST FREE CATALOGUE.
Hundreds of Interesting Series.
Very Moderate Prices.

THE LONDON CIGARETTE CARD CO., LTD.,
Room T1, 30 Wellesley Road, Chiswick, London W.4.

Electrician Outfits containing all the apparatus for experimenting with electricity and signalling. Edison Holders, Edison Lamps, Secret Switches, Coils Shockproof Wire, Morse Codes, Electric Games, etc., etc. Complete Outfit, 1/-, post free, from—
A. M. CLARK, 35, West Stewart Street, Greenock.

BE TALL! Your height increased in 14 days or money back. Amazing course 5s. SEND STAMP NOW for Free Book. L. F. STEBBING SYSTEM, 28 Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

at the men who murdered his master!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

O'Neil to the Rescue!

IT was night time and on the mountain trail out of Muddy Creek there was only one traveller—a nightmarish figure well over six feet tall.

The lone traveller was a gorilla, massive in bulk, with shaggy red-brown hair, a fierce, hideous face, and ungainly limbs. But the fact which would have made any man stare in wonder was that it had a gun-belt round its waist, and a bandolier around one shoulder.

In the holster of the gun-belt was stuck a large, old-fashioned six-shooter. The bandolier was filled with cartridges that fitted this gun.

The gorilla was steadying the gun as it hurried along, for it did not like it flapping against its thigh.

Its fierce, relentless eyes were fixed on a light ahead, the light of a camp-fire. A camp meant men, and this particular gorilla was after certain men.

The strange feud had begun back at the Dragonfly Mine, a small gold mine in the Boulder Hills in Colorado. This mine had belonged to one lone miner, Bart Masters, who had worked it for seven years single-handed except for the aid of this gorilla, which he had purchased when young from a sailor named O'Neil.

O'Neil was the name Masters had given the gorilla, and O'Neil had become his constant companion. The old miner had taught the great beast to be useful. It could dig, haul up buckets of earth from the mine-shaft, or even bring in firewood.

All these things Masters had taught it, and what was more it had learned to use a revolver with a fair amount of accuracy. It had always made old Bart Masters chuckle when he had rigged out O'Neil with gun-belt and bandolier. The gorilla had enjoyed it as much as the miner.

Then had come tragedy. One day Masters had decided to quit his mine. He had about ten thousand pounds' worth of gold, which he had considered sufficient to keep himself and O'Neil comfortable for the rest of their lives. He had decided to abandon the mine and go back to civilisation.

But that night a gang of gunmen known as the Strawhan Gang, had come to the lonely mine, had shot Bart Masters dead, wounded the gorilla which had been chained for the night, and had made off with all the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and had nearly gone mad when he had discovered his beloved master to be dead. He had buckled on the gun-belt, had taken up the filled bandolier, and had set out to trail the murderers, whom he would know again by sight and scent.

The trail had led to a saloon in Muddy Creek, where the four ruffians had been purchasing stores. O'Neil had appeared in the saloon, had created a mad panic, and the four killers had fled.

Now the gorilla was hoping to pick up the trail again. It was hoping to find the men it sought in that camp in the distance.

O'Neil did not always stick to the trail. Sometimes he turned aside and took short-cuts up the mountain-side. Finally he arrived on the edge of a cliff overlooking the hollow where the fire blazed.

Even from where he crouched he could hear the sound of voices. He drew the six-shooter from its holster.

He had been taught that if he pointed the weapon at something and pulled the trigger there would be a flash, and a bullet would strike near the object aimed at.

Now he was tempted to open fire on the camp below, but dimly he remembered that his master had taught him to get fairly near to whatever he was shooting at before pulling the trigger. He was not close enough yet. He must climb down the cliff.

Returning the gun to its holster, the huge gorilla swung itself over the edge, and began to descend.

There were no footholds that a man could have used. But the Six-Gun Gorilla had a great advantage over ordinary gunmen. He could go almost anywhere, and his strength was colossal.

Never once did he take his eyes from the fire where some men sat smoking and talking. None of the men heard him drop softly to the ground and go swiftly forward, the knuckles of his huge hands touching the ground to steady himself, his long fangs showing between his thick, parted lips. The men beside the fire were unaware of the terror that was approaching.

O'Neil stopped behind a bush, and peered at them. His face wrinkled in disappointment. These men did not look like the ones he sought, neither did they smell like them. The scent of the killers was fixed unmistakably in his memory. Now he sniffed the air and shook his head.

He had made a mistake. These were harmless prospectors. There were three of them, and their equipment was piled nearby. In the background were the stocky ponies on which they were transporting their kit.

The ponies must have scented the gorilla, for they began to tremble and fidget. One of the prospectors got up to quieten them, and growled:

"Reckon there must be a cougar around these parts. I'll put a bullet in its pesky head if I get a sight of it."

The Six-Gun Gorilla kept perfectly still. O'Neil had no quarrel with ordinary men, unless they got in his way. He prepared to back away.

Then came a sudden interruption. From the other side of the clearing there came a challenge.

"Stick 'em up! If any man moves, he'll get riddled with lead."

Two guns poked through the bushes. The dazed prospectors found themselves covered. They were taken completely by surprise, for they had believed that they had the district to themselves.

Two more guns showed on the other side of the hollow. The prospectors had no chance against their four attackers. Very wisely they remained as they were.

Four men advanced out from the darkness, leading horses which were limping with fatigue and wet with foam.

The hidden gorilla's small eyes gleamed red

with rage. It reached for its gun. These were the four men it sought! Tutt Strawhan, with his heavy red moustache, led the way, and slightly behind him came Pete Stark, Jim Lane, and El Vado, the half-breed who was such an expert knife-thrower.

"What do you want?" growled one of the prospectors.

"Just to do a little swap over," replied Strawhan, with a sneer. "Our horses are all tuckered up. They're not much good in these parts. We want to swap them for your ponies. I see you have five there. We've a load to carry, an' those will do the job nicely."

"You can't do that!" protested one of the prospectors. "We——"

Tutt Strawhan's gun came round quickly, and covered the speaker.

"And who says so?" he asked. "Got any complaints to make about it?"

There was murder in his cruel eyes. The prospector licked his dry lips, and shook his head.

"N-no!" he gasped.

"I thought not," rasped Strawhan. "These horses of ours will be as good as new when they've rested a while. We've been ridin' sent hard all day. . . . Hi, boys, get the stuff changed over!"

The Six-Gun Gorilla had now crawled closer. Sitting back on his haunches, he levelled the revolver, and pulled the trigger. Crack! The bullet knocked the gun out of Strawhan's fist.

It was a remarkable shot, but it was a mere fluke. The gorilla had aimed at the man's head!

The effect, however, was startling. Tutt Strawhan gave a yell of fear, turned, shouted to his men to get mounted, and fairly flung himself across the nearest horse.

He thought that the prospectors had been belding a trap, and that they had some comrades hiding amongst the bushes. He thought that one of the hidden men must be a deadly shot!

"Beat it!" he snarled, and the four scoundrels fled down the valley on their same tired horses.

They disappeared so quickly that O'Neil was left snarling and staring in bewilderment. When he realised that they were escaping, he bounded in the same direction.

The prospectors were absolutely amazed by all that had happened and they got still another shock when their "rescuer" proved to be a giant, hairy gorilla with a gun in its fist!

O'Neil crashed through their camp without even glancing their way. Once as he stumbled forward he fired after the riders, but his bullet went wide.

The prospectors steadied themselves against trees, and with hands that trembled wiped the perspiration from their brows. Their ponies, at the sight of the monster gorilla, went mad. One of them snapped its tether-rope and raced ahead of O'Neil, along the same path that the fleeing gunmen had taken.

The gorilla was making terrific efforts to overtake the fugitives. In leaps and bounds it cleared all obstacles, but always the frantic pony kept slightly ahead.

O'Neil noticed this, and decided that he would travel more quickly if he were astride that pony. His chance came when the frightened beast tripped over the root of a tree, and stumbled to its knees.

With one mighty leap O'Neil cleared the space between himself and the pony, and came down astride the pony's back, just as he had seen men do.

The pony squealed with terror. It stampeded at breakneck speed, and because the line of the valley was the only direction it could take, it still continued to follow the Strawhan gang.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had never been astride a pony in his life, but balance and grip came naturally to him. He clung on, gripping the pony's neck with one hand, and growled deeply in his throat when the luckless beast seemed like slowing.

Slowly but surely the pony overtook the horses. Those horses in front had not only been ridden recklessly for the past hour, but they were doubly laden. As well as carrying the weight of their riders, they had a load of gold-dust and nuggets in sacks. They were nearly at their last gasp.

Then the moon appeared through the clouds, and the four desperate killers heard the clatter of hoofs behind them. They glanced back, expecting to see a party of prospectors after them. Instead however, they saw the Six-Gun Gorilla!

Never had that vengeful animal been more terrible to look upon. Crouching over the pony's neck, brandishing the gun in one hairy paw, the gorilla looked positively fiendish.

Cries of horror escaped the gunmen. The

Stones crashed down on the three terrified members of the Strawhan gang, as O'Neil smashed a hole in the roof of the post-house.. Nothing could stop the Six-Gun Gorilla from getting at the men who had murdered his master!

man in the rear, Jim Lane, turned and blazed away with his revolver. But O'Neil took no notice.

Ahead was a river which had to be crossed, and O'Neil was hoping to come up with the killers of his master before they could reach the other side.

The gap between himself and Jim Lane narrowed. The man's horse had gone lame. He was goading it savagely, but it could go no faster. The rider shrieked to the rest of the gang to wait for him, but they took no heed.

With that terrible pursuer on their trail, it was a case of every man for himself—and the gorilla take the hindmost!

Six Sinister Sticks

ON the slope leading down to the ford the lame horse stumbled, and Jim Lane rolled to the ground. He was up in a moment, darted behind a boulder, and crouched there to meet the oncoming peril.

The pony was tiring beneath the terrific weight of the gorilla. Two ordinary riders would not have weighed so much. Only fear kept the beast going.

Then, as it staggered down the slope, the gorilla left its back. O'Neil did not dismount in the ordinary way, but snatched for the branch of an overhanging tree with one hand, and lifted himself from the pony.

He had seen one of his enemies go to earth, and he meant to deal with him. Waving the gun wildly, but without firing it, the Six-Gun Gorilla charged upon Jim Lane.

White-faced, trembling, the gunman opened fire. Crack-crack-crack! O'Neil felt something red-hot strike his chest, but it did not penetrate very far. His thick hair and tough flesh could stop many bullets of that kind without his suffering real damage.

The pain made him roar, and he must have clenched his finger on the trigger at the same moment, for the gun went off twice, sending bullets over the river.

His rush brought him up against the boulder behind which Lane crouched. The killer paused to reload, then as the gorilla sidled round to the left the terrified ruffian dodged to the right.

Three times they completely circled the boulder, playing a terrible game of hide-and-seek. Jim Lane was panting with dread, for he knew that if once he came within reach of those long arms he would be finished.

Again he pumped a bullet into the gorilla's chest as the beast followed close upon his heels, and this time the impact rocked O'Neil.

Jim Lane grunted with satisfaction, but although he did not know it, he had sealed his fate. O'Neil lost his temper and his patience at the same time.

This boulder was holding him up too long. It was delaying his vengeance. He decided to get rid of it.

Sticking the revolver loosely in his belt, he grasped the boulder with both his great arms, and heaved.

Up rose the boulder, although it weighed more than half a ton, and a moment later it went hurtling over Jim Lane's head, to roll down the slope into the river with a terrific splash.

It was all done so suddenly that the amazed gunman could only stand gaping at the spot where the rock had stood. There was now nothing between him and the avenger of Bart Masters.

A gurgle of fear came from his parted lips, and he tried to point his gun to empty it into that snarling head.

But for once the gunman was too slow. He pulled the trigger clumsily, and the Six-Gun Gorilla was a fraction too quick for him.

Crack! It was the gorilla that had fired. At that range it could not miss. The heavy bullet took Jim Lane between the eyes, and he fell flat on his face, killed instantly.

The gorilla was not satisfied. Guns were all very well, but its own strong hands were more certain. A second later it had leapt on the prostrate man, had gripped him in both hands, and lifted him into the air.

Snarling and roaring, making the night hideous with his outcry, O'Neil wrought vengeance on one of the gang of men who had murdered his master.

Then, his rage spent, O'Neil recovered the revolver which had dropped from his belt. Very carefully he looked it over to make sure that it was not damaged, and then he stuck it back into the holster.

He was quite calm now. He picked up the revolver which Jim Lane had dropped, sniffed it, became angered by the scent of the man who had held it, and snapped it in two with his strong, hairy hands.

This seemed to satisfy him completely. He went to the river, and drank deeply. Then he sat there on the bank staring across to the other side, and drummed on his massive chest with his clenched fists.

The eerie sound echoed and boomed out over the valley and the three terrified riders in the distance spurred their weary beasts to greater efforts. It was probably the first time that that sound had been heard in Colorado, but they recognised it, and their mouths dried with horror.

O'Neil was telling the world of his success! He was announcing the death of an enemy. The three fugitives knew that they would never see Jim Lane again.

Then Pete Stark's horse began to founder, and the gang slowed down almost to a walk. Sweat glistened on their evil faces as they heard the booming sound come again. O'Neil was still sitting by the river sounding the death-knell of Jim Lane on his hairy chest.

"We've got to get that brute before it gets us!" snarled Tutt Strawhan. "It'll pick up our scent again when it's tired o' doin' that. It'll be after us before long, and these horses won't take us any further. We can't keep on the run all the time."

"An' besides, we want a chance to get the gold that Jim was carrying!" grunted Pete Stark. "Surely we ain't going to leave it lying back there by the river?"

El Vado said nothing, but his lips curled evilly. His hand was on his knife.

"We've got to finish the gorilla before we do anythin' more," repeated the leader of the gang. "The only way is to set a trap for it. Revolver bullets won't have much effect, unless we get the brute in the eyes."

The other two killers saw that Strawhan had some idea in mind, and looked at him expectantly.

The gang leader reminded them that about half a mile away there was a posting-house, a depot belonging to one of the coaching companies which still ran services to link up the main line railroad which had recently come to the West.

At this depot horses were changed, mails accepted, and passengers given a chance of a meal when the coaches pulled up.

At this particular place there would be two of the coaching-line's employees in charge. The building itself was strongly built of stone so as to withstand the raids of Redskins who still gave trouble occasionally.

"We'll head there now," decided Strawhan. "We need fresh horses, and we'll get them there. And, what's more, we'll wait there for the gorilla."

"Wait for that terror—why?" croaked Pete Stark.

"Because I've told you we'll never shake it off our trail until it's dead," growled his leader. "Five years ago that post-house held out for three days against a horde of Indians. After that attack the coaching company decided to dish out some of that new-fangled dynamite to each of these depots. They'll have some there. We'll see how Bart Masters' little pet can digest a stick o' dynamite."

His companions nodded. At last they saw his idea. They would wait under cover of the building for O'Neil, then kill him with high explosive. Once he was out of the way they could clear out of the territory with the gold they had stolen from the gorilla's late master.

So for the next half-mile the three killers coaxed and goaded their horses, forcing them to last the rest of the distance.

The trees thinned out at the mouth of the valley, and the killers saw the coaching trail, which was little more than a pair of wheel-ruts, winding its way along the edge of the prairie.

The post-house was known merely as Post 78. It was in darkness, though smoke curled lazily from a chimney at one corner. The two occupants had stoked up the stove before going to their bunks.

At the rear of the building were the stables, which were likewise built of stone. The builders had not forgotten that the Redskins sometimes used flaming arrows to attack such a place as this, and the roofs were covered with flat slabs of stone.

Tutt Strawhan whispered to his two henchmen. It was not the first time that the Strawhan gang had raided such a place. They had a simple but effective plan for doing this.

They knew full well that an open attack would be useless. Trickery must be used.

Pete Stark took the best of the horses and circled to a point half a mile down the trail. Strawhan and the half-breed crouched in the open facing the door of the windowless building, hiding behind bushes. Their revolvers were ready in their fists.

After a brief interval the sound of a galloping horse could be heard approaching. It was Pete Stark, slumping forward on the tired horse as though in dire distress.

As he approached the post-house he began to call in a weak, frightened voice:

"Help! Help! Hi, there! For the love o' pity let me in. I'm wounded. Help!"

Movements inside the building told that the two employees of the coaching-line were awake. They peered from one of the narrow observation slits, saw a white man almost falling from a thoroughly exhausted horse, and concluded that he had some important message for them.

They unbolted the door at once and rushed outside, guns in hands.

"What's happened?" shouted one of them. "Is it Injuns or a hold-up? Where are you from?"

Suddenly there came a volley of gunfire from behind the nearby bushes, and the two luckless men fell, riddled on their own threshold without ever knowing who their cowardly assailants were.

Pete Stark laughed harshly as he reined in his staggering horse. Strawhan and the half-breed came out from behind the bushes and ran forward. All three killers were now grinning broadly.

"Durn fools!" grunted Tutt Strawhan, as he pushed one of the dead men with his foot. "We'd better stack 'em in one corner of the stable. These horses can be put away there as well. You two see to that while I look for the dynamite."

The hurriedly lighted candle still burned in the post-house. With the aid of this, the scoundrel searched around, finally discovering under one of the bunks what he sought.

It was a small, red-banded box marked: "Danger." Inside were half a dozen sticks of dynamite and a length of fuse.

The high explosive was just becoming popular in Colorado. Miners had discovered that with its aid they could move many tons of earth and rock in a few seconds. Blasting was just beginning to come into use.

Tutt Strawhan had used it for other purposes. He had used it to blow open the strong-box on more than one coach which he and his gang had held up in various parts of the country.

Skilfully he set to work to attach the right length of fuse to two of the greyish sticks of death.

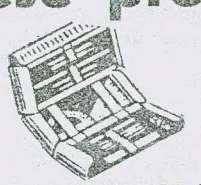
A few minutes later his two companions returned to announce that they had carried out his instructions, and that there were half a dozen fine horses in the stable.

"Good enough!" nodded Tutt Strawhan, as he barred the heavy door on the inside. "Now we can make ourselves comfortable. There's grub in that cupboard. I see three express-rifles on the wall there, and there's plenty of ammunition in the box. All we have to do is to wait for that durn gorilla to catch up with us!"

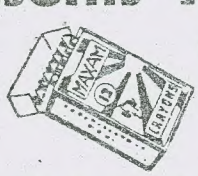
The three men settled down to watch through loop-holes. The dynamite was ready on the table in the centre of the room. This time they intended making certain of their terrible pursuer.

All these presents FREE to any boy or girl

TANTALIZER PUZZLE
A grand game for wet week-ends. You and your friends will just love it! **15 Coupons and Free Voucher.**

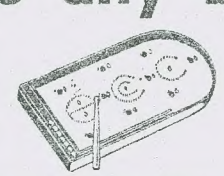


WRITING WALLET
Pens, pencils, rubber, ink eraser, ruler, set square, protractor. **54 Coupons and Free Voucher.**



BOX OF CRAYONS
In six different colours. Draw pictures of your friends! **15 Coupons and Free Voucher.**

SPEED BOAT. Unsinkable, strong clockwork, propeller, rudder. Length 13½". **102 Coupons and Free Voucher.**



BAGATELLE BOARD
You'll love this game — so will Dad. With cue and balls. **120 Coupons and Free Voucher.**

HERE'S ALL YOU HAVE TO DO
Just ask your mother to get some Rowntree's Cocoa. Every tin contains Free Gift Coupons — three in the quarter-pound size. You get coupons with Rowntree's Jellies, too!

Start collecting the Rowntree's Cocoa coupons right away. You'll soon have enough for your first gift!

SHOW THIS TO YOUR MOTHER
Rowntree's Cocoa, made by a special predigestive process, actually helps children to digest other food and get more nourishment from their meals.

For the complete list of hundreds of gifts, send a postcard (postage 1d.) to Dept. EC62, Rowntree & Co. Ltd., The Cocoa Works, York, for the illustrated Free Gift Booklet, which also contains a *Free Voucher*, value three coupons, to make your collection grow faster.

Terror on the Roof

THE gorilla had slept for a while after its victory by the river. When it wakened, it was dawn, and the blood from its chest wounds had caked in its hair. It was stiff and sore when it stirred, and that made it snarl in anger. The pain reminded the monster of its mission.

The men who had killed its master had tried to kill it. One of them had been punished, but that was not enough. O'Neil decided to go on with the chase.

He knew that guns and cartridges were no use if they got wet. He had seen his master keep them clear of the water on many occasions, so now as he forded the river he did the same.

He reached the other bank safely, shook himself, and tried to pick up the trail of the other three horsemen.

This was not difficult for O'Neil. He had his power of scent as well as of sight.

Once he had made out the tracks, he set off at top speed, sometimes going on all fours, which was the quicker way of travelling, sometimes tottering on his hind-legs like some grotesque man-monster.

Finally, he reached the spot from which the Strawhan gang had first seen Post 78. He studied the place intently.

He could see no movement in the early morning light, but he knew that his enemies were there. He could scent them even at that distance.

But O'Neil's natural instincts caused him to be suspicious. He did not like the silence of the place. He could see that the door was closed. There seemed to be no signs of life about the place.

Crouching low behind bushes, the Six-Gun Gorilla circled the buildings, never once allowing himself to be seen. More than once a low growl escaped him, but he knew that if he meant to take those men by surprise he must not make too much noise.

Once he drew his gun and levelled it at the walls of the post-house, then growled to himself as he put it away. Bart Masters had taught him that he must always see his target before shooting.

Then, away to the east, far down the trail, he saw a cloud of moving dust. It was the morning coach coming through from the railroad. In a short time it would be at Post 78.

More men! O'Neil growled angrily. He wanted no interference. He wanted these three ruffians to himself. No one else must interfere. He would have to hurry or he might be interrupted.

Stealthily he began to creep forward from cover to cover. In this way he was able to get within thirty yards of the buildings, but no nearer. The coaching employees had seen to that. They had pulled up every bush, and rolled away every boulder which might give attackers cover at close range.

Lying flat on the ground, the great beast sniffed the air carefully. The scents that it hated were stronger now. O'Neil heard the low mumble of voices. The men were behind those walls waiting for him. It was a trap!

His teeth bared savagely. He knew it was a trap of some kind, but that was not going to hold him back.

To those three men crouching behind the loopholes, rifles at their shoulders, there came no warning of what was to follow. One moment everything was silent, the next there was a bulky, reddish-brown figure hurtling through the air.

O'Neil had taken a running leap for the roof of the post-house, and he covered the distance in less time that it takes to tell.

Crack! Tutt Strawhan had fired desperately, but he missed. Few men could have hit that bounding gorilla, especially when it had appeared so unexpectedly.

The startled ruffians felt the roof creak over their heads as O'Neil landed on it with a crash. El Vado gave a screech of dismay.

"He on da roof! He up there!"

"'Course he is, you fool!" snarled Strawhan, dropping the rifle and snatching out his six-shooter. "Now we can't use the dynamite until we shift him from up there. Drive him off! We've got to get him on to the ground outside."

Stark and the half-breed were nearly deafened by the roar of their leader's gun as he emptied shot after shot at the roof.

But the roof was thick and protected by those stones. The bullets did not pierce them. O'Neil was not hit, although he was angered by the noise and the smell of gunpowder.

He did not use his own gun. He was waiting until he could see the men he sought. Up and down the roof he crawled, causing the stout beams to creak and groan. He was seeking a way in. He wanted to get to grips.

Terror seized the three killers inside. They had been fully confident that they were going to make an end of this monster. They had expected to stop O'Neil with a bullet as he approached, then to have thrown dynamite which would have blown him to pieces.

Now it was impossible to use the dynamite on the Six-Gun Gorilla without blowing themselves to pieces.

They heard stones and slabs of rock being shifted. O'Neil was pulling them up in his hairy hands and throwing them to the ground.

Pete Stark's face was green with fright. He crouched back in one corner and blazed away as fast as he could reload. He was hoping that one bullet at least might find its mark.

Tutt Strawhan was the only one of the three who kept his head. He roared at the others not to waste cartridges but to wait until they could see the gorilla. Three express-rifles at that range should stop any beast from getting inside the building.

Crash! O'Neil was getting impatient. His hand had found one of the crossbeams. Exerting all his tremendous strength, he heaved.

The beam trembled, groaned in its sockets, and finally came away at one end. There was a splintering of timber as the long nails tore through. Planking, wooden shingles and a great slab of stone went crashing down through the hole which was made.

The three occupants of the post-house retreated from the miniature avalanche. Even Strawhan was white to the lips. Dust filled the killers' eyes. They fired their rifles blindly, and the bullets whistled around the gorilla as it bent over the hole to peer inside.

O'Neil recoiled at once. He was not foolish enough to expose himself to such a hail of death. He could tell that those whistling high velocity bullets were different to those from revolvers. He remembered the things that had stung his chest, and snarled.

Crack! Crack! He had fired twice down through the roof, and the bullets ricochetted from the walls. The killers moaned with fright as they sought cover.

But the gorilla knew a better way than shooting by which to dislodge them. There were plenty of slabs of stone over the remainder of the roof. It was easy to snatch up these and hurl them through the hole in the roof into the room below.

The stones crashed on the floor, splintered against the walls, and smashed the furniture. The danger from scattering fragments made the three men crouch further and further in the background. They no longer thought of killing O'Neil. Their one idea now was to keep themselves alive. It was only a question of minutes now before the gorilla made a hole big enough to drop through.

Once it was in that room with the three men who had killed its master, there could be only one conclusion to the fight that would follow.

Panting, sweating, frantic with fear, the three ruffians suddenly heard a sound in the distance, the clatter of hoofs and the crack of a whip.

Tutt Strawhan glanced through one of the observation slits, and shouted with relief:

"A coach! It's the Westbound coach. It's going to pull up here. It's our one chance. Get ready to run for it!"

The other two men watched Strawhan hopefully as he unbolted the door. It was their only chance of escape.

The coach rattled nearer. The coachman had seen something was wrong at the post-house and he was already slowing.

The two passengers who sat on top were startled to see a gigantic gorilla with a gun-belt and bandolier full of cartridges sitting on the roof of the depot where they had expected to stop! They saw that it was tearing the roof beneath it to pieces. They heard its savage snarls. There was little wonder that they shouted to the driver:

"Don't stop! Keep going! It'll kill the lot of us."

The coachman needed no second bidding. His companion, the guard, nodded agreement. The coachman cracked his long whip, and the six horses lunged forward at increased speed.

O'Neil eyed them sideways. He did not mind what they did as long as they did not interfere with him.

Inside the doorway the three scoundrels waited tensely. The coach drew level with the post-house, gathering speed every moment.

Then the door of Post 78 was flung open, and three wild-eyed men sprinted wildly for the passing vehicle.

"Stop a minute! Stop!" they cried.

The driver did not stop, but in their desperation the three killers managed to snatch a hold. All of them swung on to the coach before it was out of reach, and clung there like drowning men clinging to a raft.

A roar of rage escaped O'Neil, and he came down from the roof in one terrific leap. He had realised that the three hold-up men were again escaping him.

But this time they were going without the gold for which they had murdered his master!

Read next week how O'Neil saves the Strawhan gang from certain death! Don't miss this thrill-a-minute instalment!

CAN A STONE STATUE COME TO LIFE AND MARCH INTO BATTLE AGAINST THE BRITISH AT THE HEAD OF AN ARMY OF HILLMEN?

It seems impossible, but read next week how the Wolf of Kabul and Chung see it happen!

The title of this astounding new story is:—

"The Stone Man Marches"

And here is the title of another great story. It is packed with laughs and thrills.

Look out for:—

"The Name Is Smith"

NOTE:—These two stories start NEXT TUESDAY so order your "Wizard" NOW and make sure of reading them!

This week you'll read how the Six-Gun Gorilla attacks a tribe of Redskins—

TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE THREE MEN HE IS OUT TO KILL.

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Red Raiders Pounce

THE horses in the coach were tired. They had already come a full lap of the long journey through the Western mountains, but now they went faster than they had ever gone in their lives.

Their necks were outstretched, their eyes bulged, their nostrils were wide; they were crazy with fear as they stampeded, pulling the heavy mail-coach behind them.

It was not the whip of the wild-eyed coachman which urged them on, but fear—stark fear. It was fear which caused three ruffianly-looking men to cling desperately to the sides of the coach as they sought to climb to the top of it while it raced along.

And the reason for this fear was a nightmarish figure, well over six feet tall, which leaped and bounded down the trail after the coach.

It was a massive gorilla, with shaggy, red-brown hair, a fierce, hideous face, and ungainly limbs. It was moving sometimes on all fours, sometimes on its hind-legs, and on the occasions when it straightened up it was possible to see that around its waist it wore a gun-belt and a revolver. Over one shoulder was a bandolier, which was heavy with cartridges.

Swift though the great beast was, it was soon outdistanced by the maddened horses. At last it pulled up, snarling with disappointment. Uncertainly it swayed on its feet, snatched out the revolver, and blazed away three shots after the departing coach.

The shots were meant for the three men who clung to the sides of the swaying vehicle. They missed, and the gorilla roared with rage. More than anything else it desired to kill those men.

The strange feud had begun at the Dragonfly Mine, a small gold-mine in the Boulder Hills of Colorado. This mine had belonged to Bart Masters, an old-timer, who had worked it for seven years, aided only by the gorilla, which he had purchased when young from a sailor named O'Neil.

O'Neil was the name Bart Masters had given the gorilla, and O'Neil became his constant companion. The old miner had taught the great beast to be useful. It could dig, haul up buckets of earth from the mine shaft, or bring in firewood.

The miner had even taught it to use a revolver with a fair amount of accuracy. It had always made old Bart Masters grin to see O'Neil rigged up with gun-belt and bandolier. The gorilla had enjoyed it as much as the man.

Then one night came tragedy. Masters had decided to give up his mine. He had nearly ten thousand pounds worth of gold. He had decided to abandon the mine and go back to civilisation.

That same night a bunch of gunmen, known as the Strawhan Gang, had come to the lonely mine, had killed Bart Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and made off with all the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and had nearly gone mad when he discovered that his master was dead. He had set out on the trail of the murderers whom he knew both by sight and scent.

The trail had led a considerable distance. He had caught up with and slain one of the four gunmen, but the other three had gone ahead of him, to the coaching depot in this lonely spot. There Tutt Strawhan, Pete Stark, and El Vado, the half-breed, had prepared a trap. They had shot the men in charge of the coaching station, and had barricaded themselves inside the place armed with rifles and sticks of dynamite.

They had guessed that the gorilla would keep on their trail, and that it would eventually track them down. They had meant to blow it to pieces with dynamite.

But the Six-Gun Gorilla was more clever than they had thought. The first the killers had known of his presence at the coaching depot was when he had arrived on the roof of the building and started to tear a way through to them. They could not use the dynamite without blowing themselves up.

The Strawhan Gang would undoubtedly have been wiped out if the west-bound coach had not appeared on the trail at that moment. Seeing the gorilla on the roof of the depot the passengers had yelled to the driver to keep going, and the three besieged ruffians had managed to dash out and get aboard the passing coach.

O'Neil's hopes of vengeance had once again been dashed. With a smoking gun in his hand, he watched the coach vanish in the distance.

A low and mournful cry came from the depths of his throat.

Slowly the gorilla went back to the coaching depot and searched for food. It had a special fancy for tinned fruits. By crushing the tins in its great hands it could extract the juice and the sweet fruit pulp.

There was not much tinned fruit in the depot, and in its fury the gorilla wrecked everything within reach. It even tore down the door from the stable, and allowed the relief horses for the coach to bolt.

After that there was nothing else to do. It seated itself on a flat rock and proceeded to clean its revolver. Often it had watched Bart Masters cleaning his gun and it knew that the weapon must be kept clean.

But the gorilla had neither rags nor brushes. It cleaned the gun as best it could by licking it and blowing through the barrel. Then came the slow process of reloading it. With clumsy fingers it thrust new cartridges into the chambers and finally clicked the gun closed.

The gun replaced in the holster, the gorilla started down the trail to the west. Although it had missed the men it sought, it did not intend giving up the chase. It had resolved to track down the Strawhan Gang, no matter where they went.

On and on it marched, sometimes on all fours, sometimes rising on its hind-legs to study the country ahead.

As for the coach, it had gone fully four miles before the exhausted horses had slowed. They were lathered with sweat and on the verge of collapse. The coachman did not

attempt to goad them any further. He knew that they were finished for the time being.

So the coach stopped, and the passengers looked anxiously behind them, sighing with relief when they saw no trace of their pursuer.

"What in heck does it all mean?" demanded the guard, still gripping his heavy shot-gun. "What kind o' beast was that?"

He addressed his remarks to Tutt Strawhan, whose face was streaked with sweat.

"It was a gorilla," said Strawhan shortly, for he had just remembered that in their flight away from the coaching depot they had left the gold which they had taken from Bart Masters.

"A gorilla! But there aren't any gorillas in America," objected one of the passengers. "Where did it come from?"

"Dunno! Guess it must have been somebody's pet, or else escaped from a circus. It killed two men at that depot. We came across their bodies, and then it attacked us," lied Strawhan.

"Then we'd better get on as quickly as possible, before it catches up on us," said the other passenger nervously.

"Can't do that, mister, till the hosses are rested," declared the coachman. "Fair run themselves to bits, they have. We've got a good start. The brute won't follow us. There's no reason why it should. It's got the whole of America to trail around in."

Strawhan and his two companions exchanged glances. They knew that this was not so.

"Just how long will it take for them horses to rest, mister?" demanded Strawhan.

"Reckon two hours will see 'em fit enough to carry on," exclaimed the driver.

"Two hours!" gasped Strawhan. "That gorilla will be here long before then. Any rifles aboard?"

There was one, and Strawhan grabbed it. He posted himself behind a boulder which overlooked the trail to the east. He meant to riddle the gorilla before it got too close. It might not be able to stand nickel-nosed bullets from an express rifle as it did the softer bullets from a six-shooter.

The gang leader had been there about fifteen minutes, and was trying to decide whether a small cloud of dust he could see in the distance was moving or not, when something whistled within an inch of his head.

It stuck in a nearby tree. It was an arrow!

Crack-crack! Tutt Strawhan fired at the bushes where he saw a movement, and a copper-coloured figure leaped in the air and fell forward. Tutt Strawhan raised a shout of alarm and started for the coach.

"Injuns! Make for the coach!" he roared.

No one needed a second warning. Even in those days, when the white men had established themselves well in Colorado, roving bands of young Indians sometimes sneaked down from the mountains to launch a raid in search of the coveted scalps of the white men.

There were a dozen Indians in this party, and they surged forward with war-like cries, brandishing their tomahawks and shooting their arrows as they came.

The guard of the coach was killed by one of those arrows. Pete Stark grabbed the fallen man's shot-gun and followed inside the coach.

Everyone who had a gun was using it. The coach gave the white men a certain amount of cover. The horses, which had been tethered beside the track to graze, promptly struggled free and bolted.

At a time like this all differences were forgotten. The Strawhan Gang knelt beside the passengers whom they would have cheerfully robbed, and fired rapidly at the attackers. Four of the Indians rolled in the dust, but the rest took cover, crouching behind bushes and firing their arrows through the coach windows.

Tutt Strawhan's face was gashed by one of these deadly missiles, and one of the passengers got an arrow in his arm.

For another half-hour the duel continued, and then the Six-Gun Gorilla arrived on the scene.

He had been attracted by the sound of gunfire, and had covered the last few miles at top speed.

Approaching the scene of the fight O'Neil leaped into a large tree, and peered down at the scene below.

The coach was now completely surrounded. The men inside were not visible, but whenever an Indian showed himself in order to shoot an arrow, a shot rang out.

The fierce eyes of the giant gorilla peered out from amongst the branches, and it reached for its six-shooter. Bart Masters had taught it that Indians were enemies. On the one occasion when a band of Indians had

"He—he's caught up on us!" he moaned. "Close the shutters on those windows. Bolt the doors!"

All coach windows in those days were fitted with iron shutters, and these were hurriedly slid into place. Meanwhile O'Neil had taken a flying leap out of the tree and landed amongst the astonished Indians.

They had expected a white man, but instead of that they saw something which made their eyes bulge with horror.

They were so frightened that they forgot to shoot at him. O'Neil lashed out on the head with the butt of his revolver, then swept two others into his arms and crushed them.

The remaining Indians turned and fled for their lives. It would be a long time before they would visit that coaching trail again.

With a roar of rage, O'Neil flung himself at the Redskins. In the coach were the men whom he was trailing, and O'Neil was not going to let the Indians cheat him of his revenge.

O'Neil had a reason for saving the men in the coach, however. His desire was to get at the three members of the gang. He knew that they were there. He could smell them and could hear their voices.

Crack! Tutt Strawhan had fired with the heavy rifle, and a tuft of hair flew from under O'Neil's left ear.

Before the gang leader could reload, however, the gorilla had cleared the intervening space with a single bound. It hurled itself at the side of the coach and tried to break a way in. The coach rocked on its wheels. One of the occupants pushed a revolver through a gap in the shutter and fired at point-blank range.

It was one of the passengers, and his .32 bullet did nto even penetrate the gorilla's hide. It merely infuriated the beast to greater efforts.

It caught hold of the lower end of the coach and shook it.

The coach rocked on its leather slings. One of the wheels actually left the ground.

Encouraged by the movement of the coach O'Neil gave another terrific heave, and this time the coach came over sideways. The gorilla jumped out of the way just in time.

attacked the Dragonfly Mine, the old prospector had slain four of them.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had never forgotten that. He decided that he must act as his master had acted. From a distance of no more than ten yards, O'Neil fired at the back of a Redskin.

What was more, the bullet struck home. The Indian gave a screech of pain, and rolled over on his side.

Caught in the Death-Coach

THE rest of the Indians turned. They could see a huge hand holding a smoking gun protruding from amongst the foliage, but that was all.

They muttered amongst themselves, and raised their bows. Four arrows sped at once to the tree where O'Neil squatted. Three of them struck the branches of the tree, but the fourth gashed the gorilla's ribs. It did little more than tear the skin, but that was painful enough, and the gorilla gave a roar that roused the echoes for half a mile around.

The men inside the marooned coach looked at each other in terror. Pete Stark gave a groan.

There was a crash as the heavy Concord fell flat on its side, and a wheel snapped off.

O'Neil's temper was rising. Even now he could see no way into the coach. He gripped one of the wheels and wrenched it viciously. The wheel came off in his hand, and he flung it twenty yards away.

Another wheel, and yet another followed. The men inside now found it difficult to fire at the attacker, but Tutt Strawhan did manage to get off one more shot from the express rifle. This time he missed altogether.

The firing of that shot reminded O'Neil of his own six-shooter. He pushed the barrel in through a hole in the coach and pulled the trigger twice. Judging by the howl that followed, he hit someone. O'Neil cackled with glee, and started to pull the coach along behind him.

He saw a steep hillside not far away. The trail zig-zagged down this, but O'Neil did not mean to take the trail. He got to the top of the five-hundred-foot slope, and heaved the wheelless coach over the top.

On the slippery grass it began to slide down the slope. Faster and faster it sped down the hillside.

O'Neil went after it, but it easily outdistanced him. It reached the river at the bottom of the hill before he was half-way down, and hit the water with a terrific splash.

The gorilla roared, and paused to see what happened. The coach had landed the right way up, and was now being carried swiftly down-stream by the current.

Once more O'Neil thought that his victims were escaping. The Six-Gun Gorilla did not care if there were three innocent men inside the coach as well as the three ruffians. He went after them with bellows of rage.

The floating coach still kept ahead, however. Shouts came from inside. Tutt Strawhan and El Vado were forcing the door open, and climbing out on top. Pete Stark appeared a few moments later.

Somewhere ahead were rapids. Strawhan had heard their roar, and was shouting to the others to jump into the river. They pointed to the gorilla, now a quarter of a mile up the bank, and Strawhan waved his gun impatiently. His intention was to get on the other side of the river and leave the gorilla on the opposite bank.

Luck favoured the killer-gang. The current suddenly whirled the sinking coach around, and dashed it against the other bank. In a moment Strawhan had grabbed an overhanging branch and steadied the coach, and they were all able to stumble ashore.

The Six-Gun Gorilla arrived almost opposite about the same time, and beat his chest with rage when he saw the stretch of rough water between him and his foes.

Like all gorillas, O'Neil did not like deep water, added to which was the fact that he remembered that he must not get his gun wet. He waded out until he was knee-deep in the water, then stopped.

The two remaining occupants of the coach were now scrambling to safety, dragging their wounded companion with them. The killers had not waited to lend a hand. They were already heading for the wooded hills that showed in the distance.

The Six-Gun Gorilla went back to the bank, and prowled up and down like some wild beast in a cage.

The escaping men got further and further away. O'Neil lost sight of them, but he was determined to get across the river. He followed the bank along until the river narrowed. In one place a tree had fallen out at an angle over the water, its roots beginning to tear away from the bank.

O'Neil went to the foot of this tree and leaned hard against it. His weight caused it to sway.

Swiftly he swarmed up the tree, and as he neared the top his weight had a greater effect, for it put additional leverage on the roots. There was a tearing sound, and the roots came out of the bank, allowing the tree to fall across the river.

O'Neil clung tightly, and as the tree-top neared the other bank he leapt clear. He had crossed the river without getting himself wet, and his gun was not even splashed.

He raced up the bank to the spot where the men had landed, and nosed around until he found their tracks. Then once again he strode along.

For more than an hour he kept on rapidly until suddenly he heard voices ahead. His lips parted in a soundless snarl. His nostrils dilated, and he drew his gun.

The voices came from men who were standing still. The gorilla dropped on all fours, then crawled to the corner. Seconds later it leapt upon them with a deafening roar of triumph.

Shrieks arose, and three white-faced men pressed themselves back against a big tree, cowering before their terrible attacker.

O'Neil stopped and snorted. He believed that he had made a mistake. These men were not the three he wanted. They were the coachman and the two passengers.

Reaching out with his mighty hands O'Neil grabbed the yelling coachman, and lifted him high in order to sniff him as a dog might sniff a bone. It was the wrong scent! He tossed the man down roughly on the grass, and tried the next man with the same result. The third man was treated in the same way, then the Six-Gun Gorilla swung away and continued his journey through the woods.

The men who had escaped the gorilla's fury remained breathless on the ground where it had flung them. They found it hard to believe that they were still alive. Just for a moment they had stared into the face of death. Not till their dying day would they forget those awful seconds when they had been held in O'Neil's hairy paws.

Safety—in Jail!

STRAWHAN and his two companions were travelling fast. Fear spurred them on.

"How do you reckon he follows us?" growled Pete Stark.

"He smells us—durn him!" snarled Strawhan. "I'd like to stick his nose in red-hot cinders. He'll wear us down. With revolvers we don't have much chance against him. I wouldn't mind if we had the gold, but we've lost that."

"We know where it is," muttered El Vado hopefully. "Mebbe we can double back an' find it again."

"No! There's not much chance o' that," growled Strawhan.

The three killers were nearing the top of a high spur of land which gave them a view of the country ahead. This was a bit south of the district where they usually carried out their crimes, and they were not quite sure of the locality. The sight of smoke and of a large cluster of cabins cheered them considerably, however.

"It must be Cripple Creek," muttered Strawhan. "I did hear that Sam Lovey was Sheriff there."

Pete Stark gave a growl of disappointment.

"Then we can't go there. He'll sure recognise us for that Pueblo affair. He was after us for three months, you remember?"

"I remember, an' I bet he hasn't forgotten us. That's why I'm going to put myself under his nose as soon as we arrive," said Tutt Strawhan.

"Are you crazy?" demanded his partner.

"Not likely!" snapped Strawhan. "You know what Sam Lovey will do when he captures us? He'll clap us in the lock-up. We'll laugh at him, an' tell him we've pals who'll rescue us within an hour. That'll put him on his guard. He'll sit around with a gun, an' maybe get his deputies to do the same. That's the best thing that can happen to us. When that durn gorilla arrives they'll be ready for him."

"Gee, that's smart!" leered Pete Stark. "When the gorilla is dead we can escape in some way."

"Sure!" grinned Strawhan.

After that the three killers hurried down the long approach to the mining-camp.

The streets were quiet when they arrived. It was a typical mining town. Shacks with false fronts, giving them added height, were on both sides, and there were numerous saloons, gambling dens, and such like places of amusement, for it was an "open" town, well patronised by men from the neighbouring mines.

Tutt Strawhan made no attempt to hide his identity. With his hat on the back of his head and his guns swinging at his hip, he swaggered to the biggest of the saloons.

As he neared the door, a short, brown-faced man standing on the steps happened to look up, spotted the newcomers, and nudged his companion. Two pairs of eyes watched the three strangers pass inside, and then the two men ran to the Sheriff's office.

Meanwhile the three gunmen had ordered drinks at the bar. The saloon keeper put the glasses down before them and demanded the payment.

Strawhan produced a gun as quick as lightning, and levelled it across the counter.

"Guess you don't need no payment from me," he snarled. "I'm Tutt Strawhan."

The bartender looked scared. Other men alongside backed away in alarm. Strawhan grabbed his glass and drank the contents at a single gulp.

As he set the glass down something hard was poked into the middle of his spine.

"Drop that gun without turning, Strawhan, or you're a dead man!"

It was the voice of Sheriff Lovey, who had come running at the news that three "wanted" men were in town. With him were three deputies, all with drawn guns.

Tutt Strawhan dropped the gun, turned, and scowled.

"What in the heck do you want?" he demanded.

"You know what I want, Strawhan," snapped the Sheriff. "Little matter of a double shootin' and a saloon robbery up at Pueblo. Better keep those hands high or there's likely to be trouble poppin' around these parts."

The three ruffians managed to look thoroughly disgusted They were disarmed and herded together. Muttering threats, they were hurried down the main street, followed by a horde of interested men who wanted to lynch them there and then.

Sheriff Lovey kept the crowd at bay with his revolvers.

"They'll get their deserts in good time," he said. "Leave 'em to me, boys!"

Tutt Strawhan glanced anxiously towards the hillside. He fancied he could see a dark brown figure lurching down the trail.

"There's no lock-up made strong enough to hold me!" he boasted. "My pals'll get me out of here within an hour."

Sheriff Lovey grinned at the gang leader.

"Thanks for the warning, Strawhan," he said. "When your pals arrive they'll get a dose of lead poisoning."

Strawhan snarled, and some of the deputies pushed him and his two henchmen down a passage into a cell. When the iron door slammed the three killers sighed with relief.

They exchanged knowing winks, and seated themselves on the bunk at ease It was the first time they had been able to

(Continued on page 12.)

6 ft. x 4 ft. x 3 ft. x 6 in. walls, light weight, white, 6/9
Green rotproof, 8/6
6 ft. x 4 ft. 3 in. x 3 ft. 6 in. x 12 in. walls, light weight, white, 7/11
Green rotproof, 10/6

Send for Camping List.

JAMES GROSE Ltd. 379 EUSTON RD. N.W.1

BE STRONG I promise you robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina and Dashing Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10-25 ins. to your muscular development, puts 2-3 ins. on chest, gives Iron Will, Self-Control, Virile Manhood, Personal Magnetism. Surprise your friends! Testimony FREE or Complete Course 5/-.
STEBBING INSTITUTE
(Dept. L.F.), 28 Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

the deft way in which James seemed to impart an air of comfort to it.

"I'll get the old stove going while you hop off after water," said Lord William.

"Permit me, sir, just a moment!" exclaimed the valet.

In two ticks he had his brush and pad out and cleaned Lord William's shoes, and then he adjusted his employer's tie and brushed his clothes. Then he picked up the collapsible bucket and set off.

"Now for a good old bath!" murmured Lord William after he had fixed up the stove.

Presently he saw James returning, with the bucket still in its collapsible state, an almost tragic expression on the valet's face.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but the people who own the water have shut down for the night.

"What!" exclaimed Lord William. "Did you tell them I sent you for some?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, what did they say to that?"

"I'd rather not answer, your Lordship. They were not polite. I thought it best to return and ask if I had your permission to sock them."

"We must see into this, James," his Lordship said. "Come with me."

James followed his master.

"There is a person called Benson I met, your Lordship," he said. "He seems a respectable man, and he will inform you further of the matter of the water difficulty."

They searched out Benson, and found him a decent, likeable chap.

They learned from him that there was only one spring of water for many miles, and that was in the hands of four men, who charged sixpence for every bucketful. The poor people of the little township were at the mercy of this gang.

"But that's sheer robbery!" exclaimed Lord William. "Why do you standfor it?"

"They own the land with the water on it," replied Benson, "and that means they've got the law backing them."

"Where are they to be found?" demanded Lord William.

Benson pointed to a shack that stood alone, about half a mile from the others.

"It ain't a mite of good your going to them, pard," he said. "Maybe I could spare you a cupful."

"But hang it," exclaimed his Lordship, "I want a bath!"

His companion stared, too astonished for the time being to speak. At length, however, he found his voice, and he began to tell Lord William just how things stood.

His eyes glittering with anger, Lord William listened to other stories of the tyranny and greed of the four men who controlled the water supply, and were amassing wealth through it, and suddenly he squared his shoulders.

"Did you hear, James?" asked his L ship.

"Yes, sir!"

"Well, we're going to get water, James

"Very good, sir," responded the valet expression as wooden as ever.

The well was guarded by a strong, bar wire fence, and the four men who owne sat outside their shack playing cards. T glanced up carelessly as Lord William James approached, and one grinned as he the bucket which James was swinging.

"Beat it!" he said. "We're shut d for the night."

"I want some water!" said his Lords "James, fill the bucket."

"Yes, sir."

In a moment the four men were on t feet, ugly looks in their eyes.

"You ain't getting no water!" snarled a most villainous-looking person, who swered to the name of Musky.

James put the bucket down.

"Any orders, sir?" he asked quietly.

"Not for the moment," replied Lord liam. "I wish to talk to these men. Bu he added, gazing steadily at Musky, "be we talk I think all masks should be remove

"Masks!" repeated the villainous-look man. "Who's wearing masks?"

"Aren't you?" inquired Lord Willi pleasantly. "Oh, I'm so sorry," he went quickly. "I didn't realise that that could your face. Please accept my apologies."

"And you accept that!" snarled Musk leaping and punching.

Crack!

Lord William met the rush with a straig left, and the tough dropped in a heap, companions staring in amazement, becomi still more open-mouthed as they saw th James, still expressionless, had apparent picked two revolvers out of the air.

"It's a hold-up!" muttered Musky, risi to his knees.

"Not at all, Mr Mask!" said Lord Willia pleasantly. "I came here to talk business

"Me name's Musky!" grunted the toug feeling his aching jaw.

"Oh, Mr Masky!" exclaimed Lord W liam. "My mistake! Hate getting co fused with names, don't you know," he we on, surveying the man through his monocl "Now, about this water. I need a bath t night, and—er—so do you, apparently, so propose the water be turned on."

"You ain't getting none!" growled anoth of the gang named Spiddle. "Get out of it!

"One minute!" broke in Musky with sly grin. "Since you're so keen on gettin water, you can have a bucketful for te dollars."

"Thank you, Mr Masky," responded Lor William. "I'll have a hundred dollars' worth James, give Mr Masky a hundred dollar But wait a moment," he went on quickly a the members of the water company starec "How much do you want for the whol supply?"

Musky and company stared harder tha ever, looking at the travel-stained garment worn by their visitors.

"One thousand dollars!" answered Musky grinning at his companions.

"Give Mr Masky one thousand dollars James," said Lord William calmly, "and ge a proper document showing that the land an spring now belong to me."

The four men stood apart, whisperin together. They did not regret the chanc to sell the spring, for every day they ha expected the law to sit up and take notic and to stop their game. But they regrette they had not asked a larger sum, and Spiddl proposed holding out for more.

"Nope!" muttered Musky. "Take th dough, and then watch our chance and he ourselves to what's left. We've got to st around here till the coach comes along."

He raised his voice slightly as he utter the last words, and Lord William overhea though he gave no sign of having done s It set his thoughts working along a fresh lin

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

(Continued from page 8.)

relax since the Six-Gun Gorilla had started on their trail. Now they would be well guarded without strain or trouble to themselves.

In the office outside, Sheriff Lovey warned his depcties.

"We've got to be ready for anything," he said. "Rake in half a dozen reliable men to keep a watch on the jail. Shoot any stranger who looks suspicious."

A cordon of men was placed round the lock-up, and the excitement in the town died down.

Time passed. It was dusk, and most of the men had come in from the mines, when the Six-Gun Gorilla came down the trail.

He did not come openly. He kept to the shadows, skulking from tree to tree.

No one saw him reach the edge of the town. There he reared himself to his full height and sniffed.

More men! Cooking! Horses! Oil lamps! Strange smells he could not place! It was difficult to pick out the scent of the three men he wanted.

But he felt sure the three were here.

O'Neil crept down the lines of shacks, standing perfectly still when men passed by. No one saw him, but he saw everyone who went down the street. He watched them keenly, waiting for the familiar figures to appear.

They did not come. Men crowded into the saloons and the gambling dens, and they were so busy that they did not see the terrible face which appeared at the windows.

The Six-Gun Gorilla was making the rounds of all the scenes of night life. He studied the faces of the crowds, and strained his ears for the hated voices.

Twice he had to leap on to the roofs of buildings to avoid being seen. Once someone heard him snuffling outside a door, and fired a revolver shot from a window. The man thought it was a stray dog nosing around.

All the evening the Six-Gun Gorilla searched, and his rage grew. He was still convinced that his victims were here. He was determined to find them.

The evening wore on. Some of the men started to go to their shacks for the night. The saloons and gambling dens became quieter. Music-boxes and mechanical organs ceased their tinny din.

As the doors were closed and the lights went out in shack after shack, O'Neil emerged from his hiding-place.

He had decided to search the town from end to end. He approached the first shack and listened. A lone miner slept there, and it was possible to hear him snoring. The Six-Gun Gorilla found an open window and stuck his head inside.

The gorilla sniffed and was satisfied. This man was not one of the men it wanted. It made for the next cabin, a somewhat larger one.

Two men occupied this. O'Neil tried to find an open window, but there was none. He tried the latch of the door, and it was open. He crept inside.

The two men were in separate bunks. The gorilla bent over one of them, gun in hand. He was satisfied that this was nobody in whom he was interested. He moved to the second bunk. The man was facing the wall.

It so happened that this man was not yet asleep. He heard a slight movement beside him, turned on his back, and saw the gorilla looming over him. He opened his mouth to shriek the alarm, and as quick as sight the gorilla brought the butt of its gun down on the upturned forehead.

The warning cry was never uttered. The Six-Gun Gorilla crept away to search another shack. He was pleased with his discovery that a tap with the gun could make anyone quiet and still. He decided to use it whenever it was needed.

Some shacks were locked, but a steady pressure from the gorilla was always sufficient to burst in the locks. Sometimes this caused the occupants to be roused, but they never had a chance to show fight or to sound the alarm. The Six-Gun Gorilla was amazingly swift in his movements. Any of the men who were dazed with sleep had no chance of dodging before the revolver-butt or the gorilla's fist thudded down on their heads. In either case it was the same. They went to sleep again. There were going to be some sore heads in the town the morning following the gorilla's search for its three enemies.

And all the time O'Neil crept from shack to shack, overlooking none, the three ruffians he sought were sleeping comfortably in jail under an armed guard!

Is this the end of the Six-Gun Gorilla's grim trail of vengeance? Don't miss next week's instalment of this gripping story, and make sure that your "Battles For The Flag" card is inside your copy of "The Wizard."

How would YOU like to be trapped in a locked room with a killer gorilla?
Read below what happens when the Strawhan gang meet this fate!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Cordon is Broken

A MAN-HUNT was going on at dead of night in the mining-camp of Cripple Creek.

The search was being made from shack to shack, from cabin to cabin. Not a building was being missed.

It was no sheriff's posse which was carrying out the search, but a lone figure which had crept into the town at dead of night, with a six-gun swinging from a belt at his waist.

The raider was a gorilla, a massive brute, covered with red-brown hair. Around its waist was a gun-belt. Over one shoulder was a bandolier, heavy with cartridges.

Stalking from one shack to the next, it sniffed outside before forcing open either door or window. Usually the occupants were asleep, and did not stir, but sometimes they seemed about to waken. In this case the fist of the Six-Gun Gorilla, or the butt of the revolver crashed down upon the unfortunate man's head and he took no further interest in the proceedings.

The gorilla did not strike to kill. It had nothing against honest miners, ranchers, or storekeepers. It was seeking three certain men, whom it believed to be in Cripple Creek. No officer of the law could have searched more thoroughly.

The strange feud had begun at the Dragonfly Mine, a small gold-mine in the Boulder Hills of Colorado. This had belonged to Bart Masters, a lone miner who had worked it for seven years, aided only by the gorilla, which Masters had purchased when young from a sailor named O'Neil.

O'Neil was the name the miner had given it, and O'Neil became his constant companion.

Masters had taught the great beast to be useful in many ways. It could dig, haul up buckets of earth from the mine-shaft, or bring in firewood.

He had even taught it to use a revolver with a fair amount of accuracy. It had amused him to see O'Neil rigged up with gun-belt and bandolier. The gorilla had enjoyed it as much as the man.

Then one night Masters had decided to quit. He had about ten thousand pounds' worth of gold. He had decided to abandon the mine and go back to civilisation.

Before he could leave, however, a bunch of gunmen known as the Strawhan Gang had come to the lonely mine, had killed Bart Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and made their getaway with all the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and had nearly gone mad when he had discovered that his master was dead. He had seen the killers when they had first entered the shack, and, after buckling on the bandolier and gun-belt, had picked up the scent of the murderers and set out on their trail.

The trail had led him a considerable distance. He had hounded the gang so closely that they had finally been forced to leave the gold behind them. He had already killed Jim Lane, one of the four members of the gang, and now he knew that the others were somewhere in this mining-camp. He meant to find them.

As he approached the back of a store, a dog rushed out from the darkness, growling at him. The Six-Gun Gorilla was on his hind-legs at the time, walking like a man. The dog had probably mistaken him for a man prowling around the store, but directly the animal came round the corner of the shack and saw this monstrous shape rearing up before it, it turned and fled into the darkness, howling.

"What's the matter, Bob?" came a harsh voice from the store. "Be quiet an' lie down."

The gorilla moved on without visiting the store. It knew that the voice was not that of any of the men it sought.

Systematically O'Neil worked his way to the eastern side of the camp. Suddenly he sniffed. He could smell man. Someone was quite close to him. Someone was out in the open.

Down an all fours, with the heavy six-shooter swinging against his hairy side, O'Neil crept nearer the source of the smell. His broad nostrils were twitching. He fancied he could smell the men he wanted.

Inch by inch his hairy head came round the corner of a fence, and he saw a man crouching against a tree, a rifle across his knees. The man was a sentry of some kind.

O'Neil sniffed again. He was almost certain he could scent his three enemies.

He circled round, intending to come up on the other side of the building. To his disgust he found that there was another man there placed in a similar position, with a six-shooter ready in his hand. A third was to the right, and a fourth to the left. They were all watching for something.

During the next five minutes O'Neil discovered that a cordon of no less than eight men surrounded this one building. His power of scent enabled him to locate them. They were grim, business-like men, and they seemed determined to prevent anyone approaching the building.

The Six-Gun Gorilla knew enough about firearms to realise that he would be asking for trouble if he attempted to rush through the cordon, yet he was determined to get through. He was now certain that the men he was after were in the barred building.

Actually this building was the local lock-up and sheriff's office. Tutt Strawhan, Pete Stark and El Vado were comfortably sleeping in a cell inside.

When the three killers had arrived in Cripple Creek they had been weary of being chased, and their nerves were on edge. Strawhan had recognised the sheriff as one who had been hunting him for a long time, and had allowed himself to be arrested along with his friends.

He had boasted to the sheriff that he had friends who would get him out of jail before the night was through. That was why armed men were keeping a watch over the lock-up.

The three killers knew that O'Neil was on their track, and they hoped that he would run into the cordon and be killed, whilst they slept in guarded comfort.

Already the guards were beginning to wonder whether they were wasting their time. They had seen no sign of trouble in the offing.

They saw nothing of the fierce pair of eyes which watched them from the darkness. O'Neil watched one of the sentries leave the foot of a tree, where he had been posted, and stroll over to whisper something to a man about twenty yards away.

Immediately the gorilla acted. It crept forward, took a single bound, and a moment later was up in the tree, well hidden by the branches.

The man who had been posted under the tree returned a few seconds later, and leaned against the tree drowsily. He had been over to ask if the sheriff meant to maintain the vigil all night, and he had been disgusted to hear that this was so.

Over the sentry's head a long, hairy arm reached down through the branches. The luckless man was suddenly grabbed by the neck with such force that he was not only lifted clear off the ground, but his breath was cut off at the same time.

O'Neil squeezed. That was all he needed to do. He could have killed the man outright, but he had no intention of doing that.

When he felt the kicking body go limp, he came down from the tree and stretched his victim out comfortably on the ground. He had now made a gap in the cordon.

On all fours he crawled forward. There was a bit of a garden at the back of the lock-up and here there was ample cover for the six-hundred-pound gorilla. It succeeded in reaching the wall of the building unchallenged.

Here O'Neil reared up on his hind-legs, and his hair bristled with rage. He could smell the killers of his master quite distinctly now.

His fierce eyes narrowed; his black lips parted to show hideous yellow teeth, and his hand went to his gun.

Slowly he circled the building, trying to find a way in. Suddenly he arrived outside a small, barred window, and from this window came not only the sound of gentle breathing but the scent of his enemies.

He had found them at last! His mouth opened in a soundless snarl. He gripped one of the bars with a hairy hand and was about to pull when something checked him. Instead, he put his hideous face close to the window and peered inside.

At first he could see nothing, but as his eyes got accustomed to the darkness he made out three figures muffled in blankets on three bunks ranged one above the other. The men he sought were sound asleep.

O'Neil raised his revolver and pushed it between the bars, but hesitated to shoot. This thing which his master had taught him to use made a big noise. He wanted no noise.

So he replaced the gun in its holster, and fingered the bars. There were two of them. He exerted his strength gently, increasing the strain when the bars refused to move.

With very little noise they came out of their sockets, one of them bent almost double. The strength of those hairy fingers was almost unbelievable.

The window was just large enough for the gorilla to put its head through, but was not large enough for its shoulders to follow.

O'Neil got his head inside, and tried to squeeze through, but it was impossible.

Again his lips parted soundlessly, and just then Tutt Strawhan stirred uneasily in his sleep. He had been dreaming that he was being pursued by the gorilla on horse-back. The dream had been so vivid that he opened his eyes, stared at the bare wall, and sighed with relief.

It was good to think he was safe at last. He turned over on his back—and nearly froze with horror.

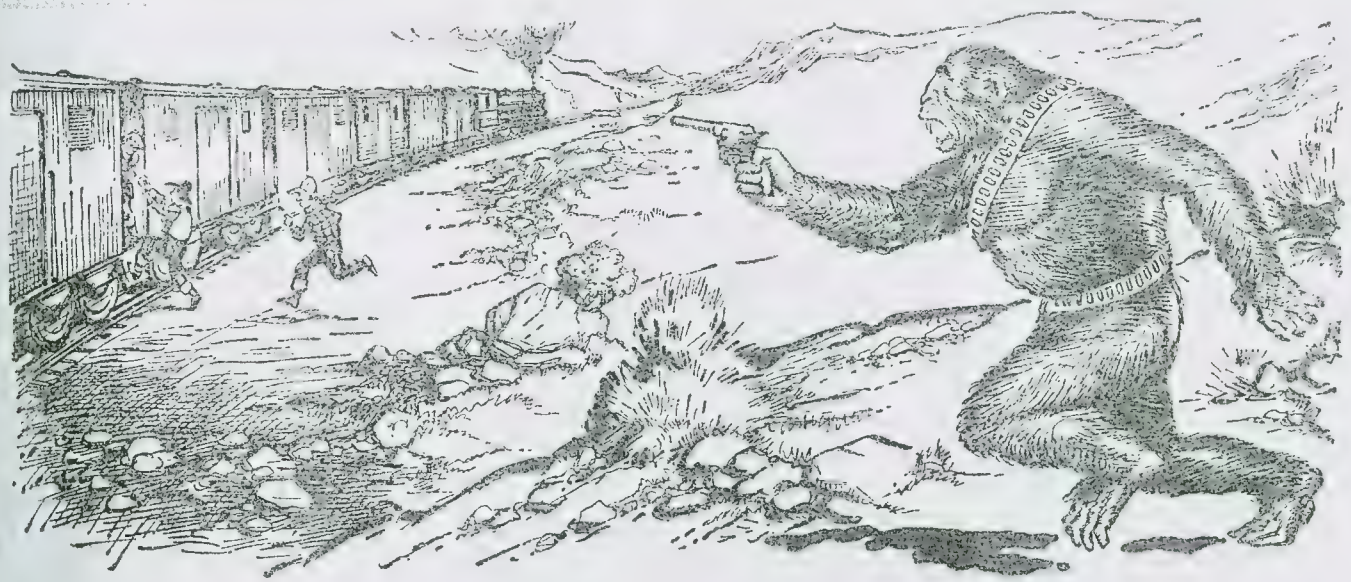
Gazing down at him from a distance of no more than six feet, was the gorilla. On its face there was an expression of the most fiendish hate. For a moment their eyes met, and then Tutt Strawhan screwed himself up in the corner of his bunk, with his blanket dragged about him, and screamed like a frightened girl.

"Help! Help! Keep it out! Keep it out of here!"

His two companions awoke and leapt to their feet. They could not make out what had come over their leader until they followed the direction of his eyes, and saw the terrible face looking through the barless window.

The gorilla was silent no longer. It had seized the edges of the window with both hands and was dragging out blocks of stones.

"It's breaking in! It's going to pull down the wall!" screeched Pete Stark. "Shoot it! Keep it out!"



The three killers were making their escape from O'Neil on the locomotive, and this time they were leaving no scent for the gorilla to follow!

The Escape from Cripple Creek

THE uproar was not only heard by the cordon of men outside, but by the deputy sheriff, who was sleeping in an adjoining room in the lock-up. Gun in hand, he rushed to the door of the cell, and peered through the grille.

From there he could not see the window on the other side, but he could see the three terrified men crouching against the wall, and staring in obvious horror at something in the far corner of the cell.

There was a crashing sound, as though bricks and stone-work were tumbling down. The Six-Gun Gorilla was tearing his way through the wall in order to enter the cell.

The three ruffians heard the deputy at the door, and rushed towards him, hammering on the door with their fists.

"Let us out!" shrieked Strawhan. "For the love of pity, let us out of here. It'll tear us to pieces."

The deputy unlocked the door and jerked it open. His gun drove them back.

"What the heck's the matter?" he demanded. "What's the fuss about, and—sulferin' mackerel!"

He had just glimpsed the monstrous head and shoulders of the gorilla at the hole which had once been a window. Even yet the opening was not big enough for the mighty shoulders of the vengeful beast to pass.

The deputy staggered back, and jerked up his gun. Crack! So unnerved was he by the terrible sight that he missed the centre of the head, at which he had aimed, and only clipped one of O'Neil's ears.

The pain stung the Six-Gun Gorilla to fury. The blinding flash and the report told him that a gun had been used. Instinct made him draw his own gun, and point it through the gap in the wall.

Crack! The deputy sheriff staggered back, shot in the shoulder. He could have transferred his weapon to the other hand and gone on shooting, but he was too amazed and horrified to think of doing that.

He had been shot by a gorilla, by a monster which stood on its hind-legs like a human being! That was the only thing he could remember.

Tutt Strawhan and his two companions took advantage of the injury to the deputy to hurl him aside and bolt from the cell.

Meanwhile the men outside had been attracted by the gorilla's shot. For the first time they saw this bulky figure reared up against the wall of the lock-up. Two of them raised their revolvers and aimed for the gorilla's broad back.

Both bullets hit, but neither of them dropped the giant gorilla. It took more than .32 bullets to injure O'Neil. The slight pain only stung him to madness.

Crack-crack-crack! He was firing back at the guards as quickly as his hairy finger could work the trigger. Bullets hummed about their ears or hit the ground near their feet.

The noise of the gun-battle brought forty or fifty men tumbling from their beds.

But as these would-be helpers neared the lock-up they heard frightful roars—roars such as they had never heard before in America. Mingled with these came cries from the men who had been set to watch the lock-up.

"It's a man—No, it isn't. It's a demon of some kind——"

More shots were followed by the crashing of falling masonry. Realising that he must take cover somewhere, O'Neil had taken hold of the edge of the gap in the wall with both hands, and had pulled down dozens of bricks at once.

He dived through the hole he had made into the cell, grimacing fiercely when he found that his enemies had gone. The deputy had gone after them down the inner corridor, and the Six-Gun Gorilla saw no reason why he should not do the same. He made one dive forward, then discovered his mistake.

Bart Masters had found it necessary to widen the door of his shack to admit O'Neil. This passage-way between the lock-up and the sheriff's office was only wide enough for a big man. O'Neil's chest was over sixty inches broad, and the great beast promptly found itself imprisoned between the two walls.

Being held back like this infuriated it. Uttering terrible roars of rage it began to tear at the walls.

The frightened and astonished men outside the lock-up saw the walls bulge. Some of them backed away. Others waited with their revolvers at the ready, and then came a shout from the rear.

"The prisoners are getting away!"

It was the wounded deputy, who had just seen the three desperate men at the stable door at the back of the lock-up.

His shout brought most of the would-be helpers round. There was a general rush in his direction, and just then O'Neil burst through the lock-up walls.

He arrived outside in an avalanche of falling masonry.

A bullet came flying out of the darkness and tore a piece of hair from his shoulder. He promptly lugged out his gun and tried to fire back. The trigger clicked, but that was all. The gun was empty.

Then the Six-Gun Gorilla remembered his quest. All these men who were shouting and shooting did not interest him in the slightest. He wanted the three whom he had seen in the cell.

A clatter of hoofs, and more shots from the left, took him in that direction. He was in time to see a dozen men, headed by the sheriff, riding down the trail shooting at three departing horsemen.

Strawhan and his two killer-friends had got away again. The gorilla beat its chest with rage, and this made it a target for a hail of bullets from the men who became aware of its presence.

Things were becoming too hot for O'Neil. He made one tremendous leap into the darkness and was lost to sight.

Mad with fury, he ran on and on in the direction of the escaping men until he was out of breath. Then he sprawled at the side of the trail, and licked his wounds, muttering and growling to himself.

Time passed, and he cooled down. None of his wounds were serious. He had lost very little blood.

The moon came up, and any passer-by might have seen the amazing sight of a hulking gorilla squatting on a bank, trying to load a revolver. O'Neil's fingers were very clumsy when it came to doing this, but Bart Masters had taken great pains over his teaching. The gorilla could reload if given time.

O'Neil had plenty of time now, and when he had finished reloading he thrust the gun back into the holster, and tottered to his feet.

His lips curled when he heard shouts and the clatter of hoofs away to the right. He guessed that other men were seeking the Strawhan Gang. They were looking for the killers in the wrong direction. Even though it was too dark to see tracks on the ground, O'Neil could snuffle the ground and tell which way his foes had gone.

Shuffling along, sometimes on all fours, sometimes on its hind-legs, the amazing creature set to work to follow up the trail once again.

No matter where the ruffians went, O'Neil was going to follow them as long as there was life in his body.

At the first stream he reached he knelt down and drank deeply, then he splashed water over his wounds to cleanse them. After a roll in the grass, he was ready to go on although he was rather hungry. Food for a gorilla was not easy to come upon in Colorado, though Masters had accustomed his pet to things which no African gorilla would ever eat.

Tutt Strawhan's Boast

THE three escaped gunmen were now in a desperate plight. They had neither guns nor money, supplies nor equipment. The horses on which they rode were stolen, and they knew that the sheriff of Cripple Creek would raise a posse to follow them.

Yet the three killers were much more afraid of O'Neil. Memory of that hideous face peering into their cell, and of the narrow escape they had recently had, caused them to shiver with terror and goad their mounts on furiously. They rode until their horses nearly dropped, and until far in the distance they heard what sounded like the shrill whistle of a locomotive.

The railway had not yet crossed the whole of America. The railhead was still some distance from Colorado's western boundary, and coaches were still used to link up the newly developing districts.

The Strawhan Gang had always operated well away from the railways. They favoured the wilder, more remote spots, where the law of the gun was the only one known.

But for the first time the shrill noise of that distant whistle sounded attractive to Tutt Strawhan.

"While we leave a scent, that durn beast can follow us!" he rasped. "We've either got to take to water, or get on one o' them railroads. Not even a gorilla could pick up the scent of anyone riding in one o' them things."

Pete Stark nodded, then looked doubtful.

"But we've got no cash an' no guns!" he objected.

"We'll soon have both," promised Strawhan.

Before dawn one of the three horses had dropped dead, and the other two were on their last legs. The three villains found themselves approacing a lonely shack which was the home of a small rancher.

Out there on the wilderness the man had carved out a small farm which supported himself, his wife, and two children. When the three gunmen arrived in sight of it smoke was curling up out of the iron chimney. Someone had just lit the fire.

"Wait!" hissed Strawhan, and they crept forward on foot to take up their places close to the shack.

Before long the rancher came out with an axe. He was going to fell a tree down near the creek for firewood.

Enviously the three scoundrels eyed the revolver which dangled from the man's belt. They followed him some distance from the shack.

Their chance came when he started to fell the tree. In order to be free in his movements he took off his gun-belt and hung it on a nearby bush.

Tutt Strawhan picked up a heavy stone, balanced it in his hand for a moment, then hurled it with all his might.

Crash! It caught the man on the back of the neck, and knocked him flat. The three ruffians leapt on him and knocked him unconscious. Then Strawhan grabbed the man's gun.

It was loaded, but they wanted more than that. They needed other ammunition and more weapons if they were available.

Three minutes later the mother and eldest boy were gruffly ordered, from the back door of the shack, to put their hands up. The frightened family were driven into a corner whilst the three killers searched the shack.

A shot-gun and some ammunition both for this and the revolver were stolen. Then food was taken from the scanty store, and a visit made to the lean-to stable. Two horses were all the poor rancher possessed. The killers took them and Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark climbed into the saddles, and El Vado then mounted the best of the two horses they had got back at the lock-up, and they rode away, careless of the fact that they were leaving this family at the mercy of any attacking Redskins who might come down from the hills.

In this way the gang reached the gleaming steel rails which had been placed so recently across the prairie. The killers looked right and left, marvelling at the straightness of the track, but there was no train in sight. Trains were few and far between in those early days.

"We'll ride east till one comes," growled Strawhan, and the other two followed him.

In the little ranch-house they had found no money, but that did not worry them. They had no intention of buying tickets for their journey. They did not intend making a long trip. They wanted to go only sufficiently far to shake the terrible man-hunter off their track. They could imagine the Six-Gun Gorilla crossing the prairie even now, tireless and relentless.

They rode for two hours or more before Pete Stark heard the sound of a train in the distance. It was the daily east-bound mixed freighter.

The killers stopped and looked away into the distance, where a column of smoke marked its approach. Then El Vado gave a screech and pointed to the right, away from the railway.

The other two stared in the direction of

FIRE!

That dreaded word was on the lips of all London!

The clanging of fire-bells sounded through the streets!

Red Flame was at work!

Dixon Hawke and Tommy declare war on this destroyer and find themselves up against another enemy equally as dangerous—THE MASTER!

Packed with thrills from cover to cover, this issue of the Dixon Hawke Library is a sure-fire winner!

Make sure of your copy of

RED FLAME THE WRECKER

You'll find another great yarn—full-length and complete in the same book—

THE CLAN OF THE CRIMSON STAR

Look out for

Dixon Hawke Library No. 506

ON SALE APRIL 15.

his pointing finger, and shuddered. A thick-set figure, sometimes upright, sometimes on all fours, was hurrying over the prairie. They did not need to look twice to see what it was. It was the Six-Gun Gorilla. The amazing beast had not rested at all. It was still a good distance off, but it was still on the track of the men it hated.

"It's not natural!" almost sobbed Pete Stark. "Can't we ever shake it off? It's no more'n an hour behind us."

"Within an hour we'll be out of this, an' we'll leave no scent behind this time," grunted Tutt Strawhan. "We've got to slow or stop that train. I know a way."

He led his horse out on to the track and deliberately tethered it between the rails. As the track was straight no engine-driver could avoid seeing the animal.

The other horses were then turned loose, whilst the three desperate men crouched in a nearby hollow.

There they waited, frequently raising their heads to see how close the train was, but as often as not looking the other way, to where that relentless pursuer was moving over the open prairie.

The train seemed to be going slower than Strawhan had expected. The three killers shuddered with horror when they thought of what would happen if O'Neil caught up with them before they had a chance to board the train.

The advancing train came chugging on, and smoke poured from the huge loco with the wide cow-catcher on the front.

Then came a whistle, shrill and penetrating. The driver had spotted the tethered horse.

Strawhan paid no attention to the whistle. The three killers were all tense and expectant. The train chugged on its way, and the whistle shrilled three times.

Then came the creaking and screeching of brakes. The train had stopped with the cow-catcher only a few yards from the helpless horse. Some men climbed down from the loco to untether the animal and turn it loose.

"Durn these cowhands!" one of the train-crew was saying. "They seem to think we put these rails here as a hitch-rack for them."

The three ruffians who had stopped the train were crawling underneath the nearest truck. There were one or two passenger coaches at the rear of the train, but for the moment the killers were content to clamber up between two closed waggons, and to balance themselves on the little platform at one end.

There they were when the train restarted. They grinned when they saw the distant gorilla speed up. In some way O'Neil must have guessed that this steaming monster was helping his enemies.

The three ruffians saw him dwindle further and further into the background as the train gathered speed. They seated themselves with their legs dangling between the trucks, and chuckled at their own cleverness.

Any place forty or fifty miles to the east would suit them, and then they could find their way back in course of time to the districts where they were known and feared. There might even be a chance of trying to find out what had happened to the gold they had been forced to abandon.

They were laughing and joking amongst themselves when a member of the train-crew came upon them. He was making a round of the trucks along the roofs, and had come over the edge of the truck in front of them before he realised that they were there.

His face betrayed honest indignation.

"Hey, you!" he roared. "What's the big idea? What are you doin' back here? This ain't a free transport, an'——"

"Come down here an' be quick about it, unless you want daylight drilled into you!" snarled Strawhan, and his newly-acquired revolver added point to his threat.

With bulging eyes, the man climbed down fearfully to the edge of the platform beside the killers. He was a long way from his mates in the cabin of the loco, and in the brake-van at the rear. He did not like the look of these three tough-looking ruffians.

"Keep 'em up!" snapped Strawhan, forcing the man's arms above his head. "See if he's got any cash on him, El Vado."

The grinning half-breed obeyed orders, but found only a few dollars. Even these were welcome to the ruffians, however.

"Where's this train's first stop?" then demanded Strawhan.

"Red Deer Valley, about—about fifty miles from here!"

"Thanks, that's all we want from you!" drawled Tutt Strawhan, and he gave the luckless man a poke in the chest with the barrel of his revolver.

The startled member of the train-crew went backwards, and the killers heard a muffled cry as he hit the ground at the side of the track.

Grinning at the success of their callous plan, the three ruffians remained in occupation of that platform until the country changed and a river showed in the distance.

The district was more wooded. There were some low hills. Cattle and mixed farming had been carried on here for some time. The three exchanged glances. It suited them very well.

They dropped off when the long goods train was slowing before entering the new siding at Red Deer Valley. Skulking away behind the trees, they spied out the land.

It seemed to them that the place was prosperous and soft. It was almost civilised, much more so than the places where they had previously operated. They winked at each other. Unless they were very much surprised there would be some easy pickings here.

They strolled down the main street with their hats over their eyes, oozing ferocity and toughness. One or two local folk looked at them with some surprise. A short, stout man with a face like a rising sun, came over to them and planted himself in their path. He had a gun swinging on either hip.

"Say, strangers, you're not allowed to carry guns in this town!" he snapped. "They're not needed here."

"Ain't they?" drawled Tutt Strawhan. "Who might you be?"

"I'm Sheriff Barker. I'll trouble you for that six-shooter. The shot-gun you can keep, but——"

"Sure! Take it!" drawled Strawhan, lugging the revolver out of its holster, and handing it butt-first towards the sheriff.

The gang leader kept his trigger finger inside the guard, however, and just as the unsuspecting sheriff was about to grasp the proffered butt, the gunman made a rapid twirl around his finger. There was a sharp report, and the sheriff of Red Deer Valley fell with a bullet in his heart.

"I said it was goin' to be easy picking for us here," murmured Strawhan. "Take his two guns. They'll do fine for you guys."

The shot brought people streaming into the street. They gazed in horror at three revolvers brandished by three men who stood over the dead body of their popular sheriff.

"Stick 'em up!" snarled Strawhan, and a forest of arms shot up into the air.

It was a long time since there had been a hold-up in this town, but one was carried out now with smooth efficiency. Each man was made to hand over all his money. The killers collected about three thousand dollars in this manner

The triumphant ruffians swaggered into the saloon, driving all the menfolk of the town before them. Unarmed as they were, these citizens of Red Deer Valley did not dare start trouble.

Strawhan forced everyone to the counter, and insisted upon standing drinks all round. Leaning against the end wall, with their guns on the counter before them, the three scoundrels made the most of their success.

All through the afternoon they kept the luckless men jumping to wait on them. A shot fired into the floor was usually sufficient to make even the most stubborn men obey their orders.

Tutt Strawhan enjoyed this sort of bullying. His idea of Heaven was a place where he would have a gun and nobody else would be allowed one.

Now he became more and more pleased with himself, more and more wild in his boasting. The sun was low in the sky. It poured in through one of the side windows of the saloon. Strawhan gazed at the sunlit patch of floor before him, and roared—

"I'm Tutt Strawhan! There's no man or beast living who can put a scare into me. Uh-hh-hh!"

His bellow ended in a choking gurgle. Everyone looked at him in astonishment. He was staring with wide eyes and whitening face at a monstrous shadow which had just appeared on the floor.

Someone or something had come between the sun and the window, outside the saloon.

Surely no human being could have such thick, hunched shoulders, and such long, dangling arms!

The blood drained from Strawhan's lips and face. Tough though he was, there was at least one thing in the world which could put the fear of death into him!

Has O'Neil managed to follow the three killers to Red Deer Valley after all? You'll find the answer to this question in next Tuesday's "Wizard," and make sure that your copy contains the FREE "Battles For The Flag" Card No. 5.

TO STAMP COLLECTORS

Closely-set Advertisements will be inserted in WIZARD under above heading at the prepaid rate of 3d per word per insertion. Spaced Advertisements 2/- per inch per insertion.

BRITISH Colonials free to purchasers our giant stamp packet. Post free 7½d. W.E., 74 Essex Road, Barking, Essex.

FARTHING approvals; 10 free; send 2d postage. Choate, Canberra, Abbey Hulton, Stoke-on-Trent.

APPROVALS.—Specials well worth request; postage free. Oliver A. Rawlings, 7 Wiseacre Croft, Shirley, Birmingham.

STAMPS.—300 different, including Airmail, beautiful uncommon sets, pictorials, Colonials. You'll be delighted. Price 6d. White, Stamps, Lye, Stourbridge.

ASTRID Packet Free. Astrid (mourning) stamp, obsolete Morocco, Agencies (Windsor), fine set scarce Airmail, Belgium Tin Hat, Roumania (King Charles), 50 different, new large anniversary stamp. Remember we give 50% discount. Enclose 2d and request approvals. Robinson Bros. (D.), Moreton, Wirral.

12/6 FREE. 38 stamps cataloguing 12/6, including 12 K.G. VI., Jubilees, Coronations, Abyssinia, Congo, Manchukuo, to approval applicants sending 2d. Cockrill, 13 Montrell Rd., London, S.W.2.

FREE! 5 REIGN AND COMMEMORATIVE BRITISH COLONIAL PACKET.—25 different, including Q. Victoria, K. Edward VII., K. George V., K. Edward VIII., K. George VI., Jubilee and Coronation. Ask approvals. Enclose postage. Also free exchange for your duplicates. Dealers supplied. ASTLEY & CO. (H.8), Newbolds, Wolverhampton.

FOR bargains in British Colonial and foreign stamps send P.C. for approvals to:—"Stampco" (Dept. C.), 44-46 Broad Street House, Old Broad Street, E.C.

FIVE Iceland and twelve pictorials free! Send postage. Request approvals. Stockton, Bridgwater, Westcliff-on-Sea.

FREE! Greenland, Ingermanland. Have you these? Send 2d postage. Request approvals. Mention paper. Shields & Platt, 29 High Street, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

FREE.—400 stamps. Request approvals. Postage 2d. M. Parker, 114 Waterloo Road, Middlesbrough.

FREE! FREE!! 100 All Different

This grand free packet contains at least 100 all different stamps, including fine 1d used 1938 NYASALAND (Crouching Leopard); obsolete mint French Colonials from MAURITANIA (Crossing the Desert) and FR. GUINEA (Ford at Kitim); pictorials from AUSTRIA (Durnstein Castle), New Zealand (Kiwi), POLAND (President's Residence), Hungary (Royal Palace), and FRANCE (Daudet's Mill, cat. 4d.); K.G. VI. issues; mint ANDORRA and MONACO, etc. Free only to those who ask for approvals and enclose 2d postage and packing (overseas or without appros. 1/- P.O.).

HELY HUTCHINSON (W.25), Hurrock Wood, Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands, Lancs.

OUTFIT FREE

This extraordinary offer includes 100 Titles of Countries, Perforation Measurer, ALBUM, new Price List, 32 different stamps, including Airmail (Biplane), stamp Mounts, Stamps from Philippines, Australasians, Hungarians and Czechoslovakians. To the first 500 applicants two large Moroccans (including Duke of Windsor) and two unused COLONIAL issues. Just send 2d postage, requesting approvals. (Airmail postage abroad 6d.)

LISBURN & TOWNSEND (W), Liverpool, 9.

Read how your hero foils the Six-Gun Gorilla's victims are sentenced to be lynched!

WILL O'NEIL BE CHEATED OF HIS REVENGE?

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

"String 'Em Up!"

DRIVEN into the main saloon at the gun-point, the citizens of Red Deer Valley had cowered before the three hold-up men. It was a long time since a hold-up had taken place in this prosperous little place, but the latest one had been a complete success from the point of view of the three ruffians who had strolled into the town about four hours before.

The sheriff had been shot dead in the very first moment of their arrival, nearly three thousand dollars had been collected from the trembling citizens, and now Tutt Strawhan and his two companions had been amusing themselves by boasting before their trembling audience.

Then, suddenly, everything had changed. One moment Tutt Strawhan had been roaring at the top of his voice that neither man nor beast could scare him. The next moment his voice had died to a choking gurgle, and he stared with wide eyes and ashen face at a monstrous shadow which had appeared on the floor.

The sun was coming through the western windows of the saloon. It had cast this shadow with thick, hunched shoulders, and long, dangling arms. Other people might not have paid much attention to it, but Tutt Strawhan had gone as white as a sheet at the sight of it. His gun shook in his trembling hand. His knees were trembling.

"What—what's that?" he gasped. "It's—it's the Six-Gun Gorilla!"

His two companions, Pete Stark and El Vado, turned their heads, saw the shadow also, and moaned with fear.

"It's followed us! It's followed us after all!" shrieked Pete Stark, and sprawled behind a table.

All eyes were on the window. A shapeless figure had shambled past. The three scoundrels stared with bulging eyes. Tutt Strawhan licked his lips in terror. He did not even notice some of the local men creeping to the rear door of the saloon.

In Tutt Strawhan's mind there was only one thought—that he had been followed by the Six-Gun Gorilla, a hairy nightmare which had come into his life at the Dragonfly Mine, a small gold mine in the Boulder Hills of Colorado.

This mine had belonged to Bart Masters, an old-timer who had worked it for seven years, aided only by the gorilla, which he had purchased when young from a sailor named O'Neil.

Masters had called the gorilla O'Neil, and had taught the beast to dig in the mine, bring in firewood, and to do various other odd jobs. The miner had even taught it to use a revolver with a fair amount of accuracy. It had amused him to see O'Neil, rigged up with gun-belt and bandolier, practising firing a revolver.

One night Masters had decided to leave the mine. He had collected about ten thousand pounds' worth of gold. He had decided that it was time he returned to civilisation if he wanted to derive any enjoyment from his wealth.

Before he could leave, however, a bunch of gunmen known as the Strawhan Gang had come to the lonely mine, and had killed Bart Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and made off with the gold.

O'Neil had recovered after a few hours, and had nearly gone mad when he had discovered that his master was dead. He had set out on the trail of the murderers.

He soon caught up with them, and since then had hounded the gang so closely that they had been forced to leave the gold behind them. One of the four members had already been killed, and only by taking to a train heading eastwards had the remaining three escaped the Six-Gun Gorilla.

The little settlement of Red Deer Valley had seemed a suitable place for the three killers to make a hold-up and rake in some money. This they had done, but when this monstrous, misshapen shadow had showed through the window, Tutt Strawhan had jumped to the conclusion that the gorilla had in some mysterious way caught up with them again!

Terror gripped the gang leader. He began to think that the gorilla was a demon which could not be shaken off, that he was to be haunted by it for the rest of his life.

He did not even have the nerve to raise his gun and shoot. One moment the shadow was there, and the next it had passed from the window. The creature was shambling round the building, and would enter by the main door.

Pete Stark let out a howl of terror.

"Don't—don't let it get at me!" he howled, and then bolted for the back door.

One of the local men put out his foot, and Stark went down. El Vado, the third member of the gang, was right behind. He tripped over his fallen friend, and was grabbed by two of the citizens of the town.

Tutt Strawhan was the only member of the gang who stood his ground. He was staring at the door through which he expected the monster to appear. His gun was raised. His finger was trembling on the trigger.

There was a scuffling noise. A shoulder showed round the edge of the door, followed by a shaggy head.

Crack! Tutt Strawhan had fired, and he did not miss. The bullet crashed through the temple under the shaggy, reddish brown hair, and a misshapen figure toppled on the step.

Tutt Strawhan opened his mouth to whoop with triumph, then checked himself.

It was not a gorilla that he had killed, but a crippled hunchback! The gang leader had made a terrible mistake. The shadow he had seen had been cast by the Red Deer Valley idiot, a crippled hunchback, whose head was set well down between his humped shoulders, and whose short legs made him walk like a gorilla. His arms appeared unduly long. His hair was long and unkempt.

This unfortunate man's shadow had so closely resembled the shadow of the Six-Gun Gorilla that Tutt Strawhan had jumped to the wrong conclusion.

The figure of the hunchback wriggled to one side, and lay still. Strawhan stared aghast. In his time he had killed many men. Never before had he felt sorry for his deeds, but now he knew that he had made a terrible mistake, and tough though he was he felt ashamed.

The local men were not cowards. They had certainly been overawed by the guns of the three hold-up men when they had arrived in the settlement, but this recent display of fear, and this callous killing, gave them back their nerve. One nodded to the other, and there was a simultaneous rush.

In a moment Tutt Strawhan had been knocked down. His gun was dashed from his hand. He was pressed to the ground and held there, whilst men swarmed around him, some of them dragging his comrades.

Strawhan did not attempt to struggle. He was too dazed and too relieved. Relieved to know that the Six-Gun Gorilla had not, in some uncanny way, caught up with them.

"I didn't mean it! It was a mistake!" he cried. "I thought it was a gorilla. The shadow——!"

"Never mind about the gorilla," growled one of the Red Deer citizens. "You killed our sheriff, and you held us up. You've had your say, an' now we'll have ours. What shall we do with him, boys?"

"Lynch him! Lynch 'em all!" roared the crowd. "They've killed Soapy Sims as well. String 'em up!"

Pete Stark was arguing at the top of his voice. El Vado was hissing like a snake with a broken back. Only Strawhan was silent. For once in his life he could not defy authority. He realised he had committed an unforgiveable crime. He had shot someone he had not intended to shoot, and now he had allowed himself to be disarmed.

Terror seized him. He began to plead with his captors.

"I only shot the sheriff in self-defence," he whined. "He tried to take our guns away. We didn't know he was the sheriff."

"But Soapy Sims, you shot Soapy Sims!" roared someone.

"I thought he was the gorilla. I swear it! We've been hounded by a gorilla. It's driven us nearly frantic. When I saw that shadow——" howled Strawhan.

The Red Deer Valley men looked at the gang leader scornfully.

"He's crazy!" growled one of them. "He's raving about a gorilla. He's either crazy or pretending to be crazy. Don't waste time over him. String him up. We've no use for his sort around here."

Suddenly, however, a big, black-bearded fellow held up his hand.

"Wait a minute!" he cried. "This is a civilised town. We don't have no lynching parties here. We'll string him up, but we'll have a trial first. Take them before Judge Peters."

The idea caught on.

"To the Judge with 'em!" the crowd roared. "Get a rope ready. We're goin' to have a trial and then a hangin'. To the Judge!"

The three prisoners were dragged down the main street of the settlement to a shack that stood apart from the others. A grave, hard-eyed man came out in answer to the shouts of the crowd. It was Judge Peters.

"Judge, we want a trial fixed up," said the black-bearded fellow who had suggested taking the prisoner to the Judge. "These guys have killed the sheriff an' Soapy Sims. We want to hang 'em, but we want to do it proper, with a trial first."

The Judge rubbed his chin.

"Well, it's not regular like this, but I guess we can fix it," he said.

There and then, from the porch of his house, he conducted the trial of the three gunmen.

They were doomed from the first. There was nothing to be said in their favour. They had entered the town on a train which they had obviously jumped, and had started by killing the sheriff. Then had come the general hold-up, and the killing of the hunchback.

The Judge looked as though he had made up his mind about the verdict long before he had heard all the evidence.

"And what have you got to say for yourselves?" he asked.

Strawhan and Pete Stark started to speak at once. They babbled about a gorilla with a gun, a sinister, nightmare figure, which had driven them frantic with fear.

Judge Peters looked more and more grim.

"Gorillas in America!" he cried. "You're crazy! Has anyone seen a gorilla or anything like one?"

"No!" roared the crowd.

The Judge's lips curled. He saw that there would be a lynching anyway, so it was as well to give it the sanction of the law.

"I find these men guilty!" he announced. "Their talk about a gorilla is just so much nonsense. Take them away and hang them!"

With whoops of joy the citizens of the settlement grabbed the three prisoners and dragged them towards the centre of the settlement, where there was a square with several trees.

The Terror on the Track

THE three killers ceased to struggle. There seemed to be no hope of escape. There were thirty fierce-eyed, determined citizens around them, all filled with the same idea—to hang them.

With their hands tied behind them, the three ruffians were dragged to the square. Ropes were fetched, and nooses made.

"We'll string 'em all up together," snarled one of the citizens.

The prisoners were pushed forward. There were three very suitable branches. They were arranged beneath these.

Three of the citizens climbed up with the ropes and tossed them over the branches. The nooses were dropped around the necks of the culprits. A circle was formed, a solemn, grim circle.

"Ready!" cried the man who had appointed himself the master of ceremonies. "Get the ropes taut. When I give the signal haul these killers off their feet."

He raised his hand in the air. Tutt Strawhan made one last desperate, choking appeal.

"But there was a gorilla——!" he croaked.

The hand of the man about to give the signal trembled. He was about to lower it, when, from the other side of the square, there came a terrifying roar. It was not the roar of a bull, nor yet of a mountain lion, but something even more terrifying. The crowd parted, flung aside by a monstrous, hairy arm.

The Six-Gun Gorilla strode into the square. He was a giant, well over six feet tall, with a sixty-four-inch chest, a shaggy red-brown coat, and a face as hideous as a nightmare.

Around his waist was a gun-belt. A six-shooter hung in a holster at his side. Over one shoulder was a heavy bandolier of cartridges, much too small for him.

His head lolling from side to side, his short, bowed legs scarcely balancing him, O'Neil chilled the blood of all who saw him.

The citizens of Red Deer Valley shrank away from him. The man who had been

THE GALLOPING GHOSTS

(Continued from page 24.)

An hour or more passed. Six-Shot Sam suffered agonies of cramp. He dared not come out because he knew that the old man had quick ears, and those two guns would thunder in no uncertain fashion.

Finally, towards four o'clock in the morning, Colonel Loader went back to his bunk, and grunted to himself as he settled down more comfortably. The old pioneer had not taken kindly to bunks and pillows. A rolled blanket had been his only bed for very many years, and it was only recently that he had agreed to sleep in what he called an unwanted contraption.

Six-Shot Sam sighed with relief and stretched himself. This time the old man would surely sleep soundly. There was no sleep quite as sound as that just before dawn. It would be safe to stab the boy first and then turn his attention to the Colonel.

Once again Six-Shot Sam made his way down the passage to the rooms of the sleeping Loaders. Things could not have looked better for him Peter Loader lay on his side with his face towards the wall. The bed-clothes had fallen down to reveal the exact spot under his shoulder-blade where the killer intended to drive his knife.

Down on his hands and knees he went, and started that sinister crawl. No sound came from the Colonel's room. The killer reached the bedside without mishap.

At last he rose on one knee. His knife-hand slowly went upwards and backwards.

Tap-tap-tap! Suddenly there came a slow muffled, rather uncanny sound, a knocking from the window at the end of the room

It was almost as though a branch was knocking against the glass in the wind, but there was neither branch nor wind. Six-Shot Sam slowly turned his eyes in that direction, the knife still upraised.

His breathing became faster. His eyes widened in terror. The blood drained from his face, and his limbs seemed to turn to water.

Outside the window something was standing. The tapping was not accidental, but deliberate. It was being done by ghostly fingers, pale, glowing fingers—the fingers of the ghost of Wal Loader!

The ghost stood close to the window, which was closed. Its face was pressed forward against the glass, so that every detail of it was visible. It seemed to be trying to see into the room.

Six-Shot Sam lowered his knife-hand with a choking sob. He knew that he had not been seen yet. No one from outside could see across that darkened room as far as the bunk which was in deep shadow.

But sight of that sinister figure, the same figure that had so nearly claimed his life up on the hillside three hours earlier, made the would-be killer feel as helpless and as panic-stricken as a kitten in a den of lions.

Tap-tap-tap-tap! went the ghostly fingers on the window pane, and Six-Shot Sam almost screamed aloud.

The bunk creaked. Peter Loader was awake at last. He turned on his back, and rubbed his eyes.

Tap-tap-tap! The insistent signal outside the window was repeated.

The man on the floor made a dash for the door. His nerves could stand it no longer. Peter Loader snatched for the revolver under his pillow, and sat up.

"Who's that? What——?"

The ghostly figure of his dead brother was unmistakable outside the window. The boys' eyes settled on it for a second or so, and showed no surprise at the sight. It was evident that he was used to seeing the Galloping Ghosts, but he was not used to having crawling figures in his room by night.

"Someone in the shack, father!" he bellowed, and leapt from the bunk.

In the passageway he was just in time to see a door thrown open and a leaping figure stumbling into the open.

Peter Loader raised his six-shooter and pulled the trigger twice. Once he saw the running man lurch and fall, but stagger to his feet again and bolt for the woods.

Six-Shot Sam had stirred up a hornets' nest in more ways that one when he had entered the Loader coaching depot that night!

Don't miss next week's dynamic instalment of this story, and make sure that "The Bayonet Attack at Givenchy" is inside your copy of "The Wizard."

about to give the order for his companions to haul on the rope, now lowered his hand limply, and gave a strangled gasp.

The Six-Gun Gorilla was breathing heavily. His massive body was wet with sweat. He had evidently come a long way in a short time.

But his eyes were fixed on the three bound men who stood beneath the tree, and they stared back at him in silent terror.

The gorilla advanced slowly. The rest of the crowd meant nothing to it. It was those three men it wanted, the three who had murdered its master and wounded the beast itself.

He made an awkward leap towards the three killers, and the men who were holding the ropes dropped them and ran for their lives.

O'Neil growled in his throat, and grabbed for the ropes. The bound men could not escape him. Their legs could move, but not their arms. Before they could attempt to run away the Six-Gun Gorilla had grasped all three ropes in his hand, and dragged the killers towards him.

Half-strangled, the three prisoners had to follow him. The nooses tightened every time they drew back.

"Help! Help!" panted Tutt Strawhan. "Save us. Shoot the brute!"

Growling and snarling, O'Neil started to drag the killers towards the outskirts of the settlement.

The startled Red Deer citizens crowded together, muttering and jabbering. The truth was that they had never faced a situation of this kind before. They did not know what to do.

Then one of them lugged out a heavy shot-gun.

"They were right about a gorilla!" he roared.

He aimed at the departing gorilla, and fired. The shot went wide, but O'Neil heard the whistle of the pellets, and bared his teeth as he turned. He knew all about those whistling missiles. He knew how to shoot them himself.

One hairy hand went to his holster, and he drew Bart Masters' gun, aimed it, and pulled the trigger three times in quick succession. The startled men of Red Deer Valley scattered for cover. They were being fired on by a gorilla!

O'Neil fired another shot, then put his gun back in the holster. He had no quarrel with those other men, but he wanted them to keep their distance whilst he dealt with his prisoners.

The three killers were choking and gurgling. The ropes had cut into their necks. How they were not strangled was a miracle, because O'Neil was now travelling quickly and they were simply being dragged along.

The Six-Gun Gorilla wanted to get his prisoners to a quiet spot where he could deal with them as he wished.

He got them away from the houses. His hairy foot stumbled over something which for the moment tripped him.

Although O'Neil did not know it, the thing over which he had tripped was a rail. He had come to the railway. To him it seemed a likely trail. Darkness had now fallen over the prairie.

Stumbling and tripping, Tutt Strawhan and his companions had to follow. None of the Red Deer Valley citizens set out after them. The idea of an armed gorilla, which not only knew what a gun was, but knew how to aim and fire it, had paralysed the citizens of that settlement.

O'Neil began to snarl fiercely. He was thinking of the beloved master whom these men had killed. His fingers clenched and unclenched in fury.

Suddenly in the distance there was a wailing shriek, and Pete Stark managed to croak—

"There's a train coming! Get off the track!"

The prisoners made a dive to one side, but O'Neil hung on to the ropes. He was so strong that he could hold them in spite of their struggles. Every time they pulled, it tightened the nooses, so that the killers could scarcely breathe.

"Stop! Get off the track—train coming!" sobbed Strawhan.

O'Neil took no notice of his prisoners' pleas. He wondered why these men were tugging so much on the ropes when they knew that they could not escape.

His back was to the oncoming headlights of the train. He was so angry that he did not even hear the noise of its approach.

The shrill whistle of the locomotive sounded again. The keen-eyed driver had seen something on the track.

O'Neil heard it at last. Not relaxing his hold on the ropes for one second, he turned his head. He blinked at the glaring search-light above the cow-catcher of the locomotive. The light blinded him. He sensed that there was a huge bulk behind it, heard the clank of pistons and of wheels, and was frightened.

Here was something even bigger and stronger than himself. He had never seen such a monster approaching him before.

His lips drew back from his gums, his nostrils and his eyes dilated. His hair seemed to stiffen on his back.

This monster was going to try and take his prisoners from him, he decided. It was going to try and take from him the men whom he had trailed for so long and finally captured.

Fear turned to blind rage. The train was groaning to a standstill. The driver had applied all the brakes.

The three prisoners on the end of the ropes suddenly found themselves released. O'Neil had taken a running jump for the cow-catcher. The locomotive had almost stopped.

The gorilla scrambled over the cow-catcher, along the footplate of the engine, to the side of the cabin where the driver and fireman were staring in awe.

The latter suddenly struck out at the gorilla with the long-handled shovel, and O'Neil caught it in his hand and snapped it. Then the gorilla dived for the driver and the fireman.

They jumped for their lives. They fell over the other side of the track and rolled down the banking. O'Neil gripped a steel rod and jumped up and down the footplate with rage, shrieking and roaring, trying to tell the world that no one should take his prisoners away from him.

A hissing, spluttering noise behind him made him turn. There was a good steam pressure in that boiler, and one of the valves was bubbling. It enraged O'Neil. He struck at it.

He missed, but as luck would have it the gorilla struck the throttle control. He knocked it partially open.

Steam gushed into the cylinders. The locomotive gave a lurch and started to move forward.

The Six-Gun Gorilla did not know what this movement meant. It made him afraid. Whenever he was scared of something which he did not understand, he jerked out his revolver and brandished it.

This was what he did now. The locomotive gradually picked up speed, the coaches and trucks behind rumbling along at a good twelve miles an hour.

The three men with the noosed ropes round their necks now jumped for their lives. They lay on the ground to one side of the track as the train passed by. Their last glimpse was of a huge, hairy figure brandishing a revolver from the cab of the locomotive.

Tutt Strawhan was the first to recover from the shock.

"That gorilla ain't natural," he gasped. "It's—it's driving the train just as though it was used to it. The driver's gone. The gorilla's in charge!"

The three killers began to tug at the ropes

The gorilla approached the horse to find out if it belonged to the men he was seeking. Suddenly the terrified animal lashed out with its hindlegs, and O'Neil was knocked out for the first time in his life!

which held their hands behind their backs. Once they could rid themselves of these their plight would be a much easier one.

Strawhan's Pepper Plot

THE locomotive gradually increased its speed. The shaking and the rocking made the gorilla aware that something unusual was happening. It fired blindly with its revolver and knocked off the glass cover of a pressure gauge.

Steam gushed forth, and the gorilla leapt on to the piled coal in the tender for safety. It was afraid of the hissing and bubbling in other parts of the engine.

On rocked the train. There was no hand at the throttle. Now that it had been opened half-way the train would run until that head of steam gave out. Maybe the passengers in the coaches at the rear wondered why they had stopped and started again in that fashion, but they could never have guessed that their lives were in the hands of a huge gorilla, or that the train had saved three ruffians from a well-deserved fate.

O'Neil stared over the side of the engine at the rushing embankments and the swiftly-passing trees. He did not like the look of them. They looked unnatural. He beat his chest with his clenched fists, and bellowed wrathfully.

That did no good. The train sped along as fast as ever. Not until the pressure of steam gave out would it stop. O'Neil knew nothing of this. Gripped by a sudden fear, he leapt wildly out into the darkness.

Thud! There had been a tree about ten yards away. The gorilla had collided with it. With a fifteen-mile-an-hour force behind its leap, and a weight of six hundred pounds to back it up, the impact with the tree was terrific. There was a snapping sound, and it broke off near the roots. O'Neil, half-stunned, rolled over and over down the banking.

There he lay, breathing hard, his head feeling as if it had been split. He had no idea where he was or why he was there.

A quarter of an hour must have gone past before he arose and shook himself. He had the track to himself. The train had gone, the lights of Red Deer Valley were beyond a rise in the prairie, and could not be seen. There was not a sound to break the silence of the night. About that same time the runaway train was hissing to a standstill about five miles distant.

O'Neil lurched to his feet. He shook his head, pounded on his chest, and snarled.

He remembered his three enemies, the three he had tracked such a distance, and he remembered a strange monster coming between him and these men and rescuing them.

Once again rage seized him. He sniffed the track, but found no scent, not even his own. A human being might have been lost, but not the Six-Gun Gorilla. Instinct told him which way to take. He turned back the way the train had brought him and fled along the darkened track, sometimes upright, sometimes on all fours.

He did not take more than an hour to reach the outskirts of Red Deer Valley, and there he searched around like some nightmarish bloodhound for the scent of the men he sought.

He found the cast-off ropes. Tutt Strawhan and his companions had rid themselves of their bonds. O'Neil snarled at them, and gripped his gun, but there was nothing at which to aim. He fired no shots.

It was not difficult for him to pick up their trail. He scented them almost at once, and set out after them. Back towards the edge of the settlement he went, until he came to a stable.

The stable door was open. There were no horses inside. A local cattle dealer had possessed three good horses only an hour before. Now they were gone. The Strawhan Gang had taken them. Those three frightened men had wanted to get away from the district more than anything in the world. They had not bothered about buying the horses which they required in order to make their escape.

O'Neil squatted down and growled to himself. He noticed the tracks of the horses, sniffed them, peered at them with his little, intent eyes, and licked his lips.

It was not the first time he had trailed the killers when they were on horseback. They could not shake him off by escaping on horses.

Nearby the same owner of the stable had stored some mangels for his cattle in the winter. O'Neil sat down beside these and seized one of the huge, turnip-shaped vegetables.

His yellow fangs bit deeply into it. He was ravenous. In Colorado there was not much food suitable for an African gorilla, but anything in the way of fruit or vegetables suited O'Neil. He ate that mangel to the last fragment, then grabbed another.

In all he ate a dozen of the pile, and felt better after his meal. A drink of water at a nearby pool refreshed him, and once more he took up the trail of the fleeing horsemen.

The gun flapped against his thigh. Sometimes he steadied it with a hairy hand.

More often than not he travelled on all fours, but sometimes he rose on his hind legs and peered ahead, sniffing the air, and growling to himself.

The night grew darker. A wind chilled the air. The stars were blotted out. Coyotes howled in the distance. The Six-Gun Gorilla kept the same pace, however, never once faltering.

A horse could have gone faster than the gorilla, but it could not have gone further. Tutt Strawhan was heading for his old district, the district where he and his gang had made themselves feared by everyone by their terrible crimes. There the three killers hoped to regather their fortunes, and collect some more kindred spirits to go in search of Masters' gold, which they had been forced to leave behind them when fleeing from the vengeance of the Six-Gun Gorilla.

The Strawhan Gang did not talk as they rode along. They were too tired and too scared for that. Yet they could not have been more silent than their pursuer.

Except for his breathing, O'Neil made absolutely no sound. He plodded on like a machine.

At last he saw a light ahead, and gave a deep growl. He drew his gun, and flourished it. Lights meant men, perhaps the three men he sought. Men understood these things called guns. The gun gave them power over him.

So, like some gunman bent on murder, he crept towards the cluster of huts which nestled at the foot of a pass. It was not a settlement, but merely a place where someone had built a store at the cross-trails.

Cattlemen, prospectors going north, and prospectors coming south, all stopped there as their first contact with civilisation after being in the wilds. There were two lean-to huts besides the store, and outside the store was the usual rail to which horses were tied.

At the moment there were five horses tied there, and the Six-Gun Gorilla shambled up to them.

He wanted to sniff them and find out whether any of them were the ones which the men he had been following had stolen.

The first horse he approached reared and broke its rope. The next moment it fled into the darkness. The second one squealed and did likewise. The third buck-jumped and pawed the air, before it fell over on its back and lay kicking its legs in the air.

O'Neil made for the fourth horse. This was a chestnut with a wicked look in its eyes.

It waited until the gorilla was within reach, then up flashed its hind legs.

Both hooves caught O'Neil on the throat, and bowled him over backwards.

Never in his life had he been hit so hard. He turned two complete somersaults before falling amongst some bushes and remaining still.

The maddened horse then tried to break loose, but its halter was too strong. It was still plunging when the noise brought some men running out from the saloon.

Tutt Strawhan, his two killer henchmen, and two other friends of his were there. At the discovery that their horses had gone, they raised a shout.

Strawhan shouted to them to take care.

"Be careful the gorilla isn't around!" he roared. "Something must've scared the horses. I reckon the gorilla's lurking about."

The two men who had not been with the gang leader during the recent ordeal were inclined to scoff at his fears. They did not know the terror aroused by that slow and deliberate tracker. They muttered something about being determined to get their horses, and rode away into the darkness on the animals that had remained tethered.

Tutt Strawhan and the two members of his gang crowded in the doorway of the store. They had collected guns as soon as they had arrived amongst friends. Now they levelled them into the darkness.

"If he's out there he'll give himself away sooner or later," muttered Tutt Strawhan. "I've got an idea. If he's skulkin' around we'll get him. Someone fetch me a lot of pepper, five or six pounds of it. I saw a keg near the end of the counter in the store."

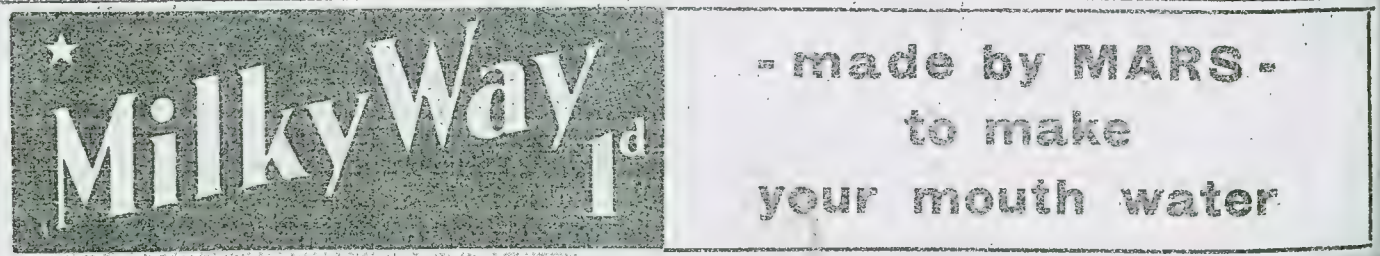
A minute later Pete Stark came staggering back with the entire keg. Whilst Strawhan and El Vado walked behind him with drawn revolvers, Stark poured a thick ring of pepper right round the store.

He made a complete circle, after which he dumped the remainder of the keg on the steps at the door of the store, and retired inside with the others.

The three killers had an idea that O'Neil would come snuffling around the store very soon. When he put his nose into the pepper he would soon give himself away.

Then would be the time to pour a volley into him.

Will O'Neil fall into the pepper trap? You'll find the answer to this question in next Tuesday's "Wizard," and make sure that your copy contains No. 6 of the FREE "Battles For The Flag" Cards!



Printed and Published in Great Britain by D. C. Thomson & Co., Ltd., 12 Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.
Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post.

Read how Tutt Strawhan defends himself against the vengeance of the Six-Gun Gorilla—WITH TWELVE RASHERS OF BACON!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Battle in the Store

THERE was no town, not even a village, but merely a store and two lean-to huts at the cross-trails.

It was night, and somewhere away in the distance sounded the rattle of hoofs. Horses were stampeding, and two mounted men were after them.

Within the doorway of the store stood three grim men with levelled guns. They had put out the lights behind them. They seemed to be listening intently for something they were expecting.

Occasionally they whispered amongst themselves, but very low. They seemed afraid to raise their voices.

Yet those three were three of the toughest gunmen in that part of the West. They were men who had committed many crimes in their time, and who were feared far and wide.

Now, however, they trembled at every sound, and pointed their guns towards the slightest noise. Their nerves were almost at breaking point.

It was not another gunman they feared, at least, not a human one. They were expecting to see a huge, slouching figure loom out of the darkness—a gorilla!

For some weeks now Tutt Strawhan and his companions had been trailed by the Six-Gun Gorilla, a hairy monster which had come into their lives at the Dragonfly Mine, a small gold mine in the Boulder Hills of Colorado.

This mine had belonged to Bart Masters, a lone miner who had worked it for seven years, aided by the gorilla, which he had purchased when young from a sailor named O'Neil.

O'Neil was the name Masters had given the gorilla, and the miner had taught the great beast to do various useful jobs. He had even taught it how to fire a revolver.

One night Masters had decided to abandon the mine and go back to civilisation. He had nearly ten thousand pounds' worth of gold.

Before he could leave, a bunch of gunmen known as the Strawhan Gang had come to the lonely mine, and had killed Bart Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and made off with the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and had nearly gone mad when he had discovered his master was dead. He had buckled on his dead master's six-shooter and bandolier, and had set out on the trail of the murderers.

The trail had led him several hundred miles already. He had hounded the gang so closely that they had been forced to leave the gold behind them. One of the four had already been slain, and the rest had tried to shake O'Neil off by jumping a train. He had managed to pick up the trail, and had reached this lonely spot, where the three ruffians had expected to find two fellow-crooks.

Suddenly the horses tethered outside the store had broken loose and stampeded. The Strawhan Gang felt sure that O'Neil was the cause of this, and that he was skulking somewhere nearby. Whilst the two men they had met at this place had gone in search of the runaway horses, Tutt Strawhan, Pete Stark, and El Vado, the half-breed, had arranged a trap for the Six-Gun Gorilla.

They had scattered pepper thickly around the store, and were now waiting with their guns. If O'Neil pushed his nose into the pepper and betrayed himself by sneezing, the gang would at once empty their guns into him.

That was why they were so silent.

Time passed. In the distance they could hear their comrades, who were chasing the horses, shouting to each other. Evidently they had not yet rounded up the runaways.

"What's happened to him?" muttered Tutt Strawhan. "Why is he so quiet?"

None of the killers knew. They did not know that one of the frightened horses, in breaking loose, had let fly with both hoofs at the Six-Gun Gorilla.

The gorilla now lay unconscious amongst the bushes not a dozen yards from the store. It was the first knock-out O'Neil had received in his life.

Gradually the great beast recovered his senses. First of all his thick tongue moved, then his eyes flickered, and he slowly raised his head. That gave him an agonising pain, for the two hoofs of the horse had landed on his throat.

The pain cleared his head. He snarled about it, managed to sit up, balancing himself with his hands, and glared about him.

He could neither hear nor see anyone, but somewhere close by he could smell human beings. What was more, he could smell the particular human beings he sought!

His hair began to bristle. He lurched to his feet, steadying himself with one hairy hand against a tree.

His lips drew away from his ugly teeth, and the other hand dropped back to the gun-belt at his side. It was a very human gesture, just as though he meant to draw a gun.

Then his eyes searched the darkness. He saw the low framework building which was the store, and guessed that the men he sought were hidden there.

He had no need to go snuffling along the ground in order to follow the scent which drifted on the wind. He knew that the men he wanted were in this building.

Slowly, ponderously he commenced to drag himself towards the spot. Once again the stark hatred that he felt for the killers of his master was welling up in his heart.

There were no lights in the store, but a bright star overhead was reflected in one of the windows. O'Neil saw this and paused.

What was that light? He suspected a trap. He was always suspicious when he was dealing with men.

Slowly, deliberately he reached for the six-gun and drew it from the holster. The gun was fully loaded. Bart Masters had taught his pet how to do this.

The Six-Gun Gorilla levelled the gun, aimed at the light reflected from the window, and fired. Crack! There was a shattering of glass, and from the doorway came a babble of excited voices.

Strawhan and his gang had not expected this. They had been waiting for sneezing or spluttering when the gorilla reached their barricade of pepper. The shot had startled them by its unexpectedness. Pete Stark, in his nervousness, loosed off his gun.

O'Neil crouched and snarled. He knew the danger of those flying missiles, and he was not fool enough to rush against them. Stealthily, slowly he made for the side of the store wall.

In that position, crawling almost on his stomach, it was impossible for him to avoid getting a sniff of the pepper which was so thickly spread on the ground.

He gasped, snorted, and gave vent to a tremendous sneeze. It was more like an explosion than a sneeze. His eyes watered, and he caught his breath. He sneezed again.

"There he is!" croaked Pete Stark, and fired into the darkness.

Luckily for O'Neil he was too low to the ground to get the benefit of the full blast of the gunfire, but one or two of the pellets from a sawn-off shotgun caught him and tore through his hair. They wounded him, but they were only slight flesh wounds. The pain angered him, however, and with the Six-Gun Gorilla anger meant only one thing—attack.

With a terrible roar of fury he made a bound which a kangaroo might have envied, and cleared the space to the front porch of the store.

He seemed to the three killers to have come from nowhere. Strawhan and his partners had no time to fire off their guns at their enemy. They fell back into the store for cover, and O'Neil plunged after them.

It was very fortunate for them that his immense shoulders were too great for the width of the door. He stuck in the doorway, and that delay gave them a chance to scramble for the rear of the store, where they crouched behind the counter.

Crack-crack-crack! Three revolvers were out, pouring shots towards the door. Fear must have made their aim faulty, for not a single bullet hit the Six-Gun Gorilla.

O'Neil was in a raging temper by this time. Gripping the doorposts, one in either hand, he tugged, and they came away easily. Not only did they come away, but they brought half of the wooden walls of the store with them. When O'Neil advanced into the store, he carried before him a shield of timber.

Bullets thudded into this woodwork, but did not enter the hairy body behind. Like a tank going into action, the Six-Gun Gorilla marched down the centre of the store.

The three men behind the counter suddenly turned and bolted through a rear door into the darkness and fled.

The gorilla again dived after them. He collided with the counter, from which a collection of tins, pots, and packages dropped on to the floor.

There were some pots of honey, which broke on the floor. In passing, O'Neil must have put one of his forepaws into some of the spilled honey, and cut it slightly on the glass.

Raising his wound to his lips in order to lick it, he became conscious of the sweet flavour of the honey. Sugar, jam, honey, or anything of that kind were to O'Neil the most attractive things in life. He paused, groped around amongst the wreckage, and found more of the broken pots.

There and then he crouched down amongst the wreckage of the contents of the counter to lick up everything sweet. There was nothing that he overlooked. He even crushed tins flat in his paws and sucked the contents. For the time being he was not a gorilla with a purpose in life, but merely a hungry animal which had come upon a store of good things.

Tutt Strawhan and his comrades had returned to the wrecked store thinking that it was empty, but in a few seconds they were going to get an unpleasant surprise.

The three fleeing men had time to reach the safety of some cliffs to the rear of the cross-trails, and there they climbed to a ledge where they felt sure they could hold their own against the gorilla.

Guns in hand, they waited through the dark hours that followed. They almost hoped that O'Neil would come and try to clamber up to the ledge. It would be easy to put a bullet in his head as he did this.

But O'Neil was much too busy. For once he had discovered something even more pressing than his longing for vengeance. He gorged himself on the contents of the store.

Hours passed. The weary men who had been chasing the horses returned. They had caught the runaways, and felt pleased with themselves.

Hitching these to the rail outside the store, they passed through the door.

"What's the idea of putting the lights out and leaving the door open, Strawhan?" growled one.

"Huh!" came a grunt from the darkness, and two hairy paws reached out and caught the tough Westerner about the middle.

Right up into the air the wretched man was lifted, and duly sniffed and examined by the gorilla. Speechless with fear, he did not even dare cry out.

"What's the matter, Hank?" cried his pal.

A strange, gurgling sound was the only reply he received. Suddenly panic-stricken, he turned and fled. His limp friend was hurled after him as though he had been a doll.

O'Neil had discovered that this was not one of the men he sought.

O'Neil Claims Another Victim

DAWN came, and the store was now as silent as a tomb. There was no movement inside. The Six-Gun Gorilla lay sleeping amongst a hundred burst tins and broken jars. He had eaten his fill.

He still gripped the revolver in one hand, and the bandolier had slipped up around his neck. The gorilla was snoring.

On the ledge on the nearby cliff three sunken-eyed men clung on for their lives and stared towards the cross-trails. They were stiff and cold. They wanted to come down, but they did not dare do so. They still did not know what had happened to the gorilla after they had fled from the store.

"Maybe we kill heem with our shooting!" muttered El Vado. "Maybe he die."

Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark wished they could believe that this had happened. It was true that they had hit O'Neil once or twice, but they doubted whether his wounds were fatal, because his hide was so thick.

Yet no movement came from the store. Birds settled on the roof and flew away again peacefully. The horses tethered to the rail outside kicked their heels impatiently, and wondered when they were going to be fed.

Everything looked peaceful enough. The sun came up and shone warmly on everything. Tutt Strawhan and his comrades became hungry and thirsty.

"Guess we'd better go down. He's gone somewhere else. Maybe he chased Hank and Ike when they brought back the horses," murmured Strawhan. "Go over and see if everything's all right at the store, Stark."

Pete Stark paled and shook his head defiantly.

"Go yourself, if you're so eager!" he snarled.

Tutt Strawhan dropped a hand to his gun, then, realising that there was no use quarrelling amongst themselves, he made for the edge of the ledge.

"I will!" he said.

Down he went, and the other two killers

pushed forward to watch him creep up to one of the store windows. They saw him peep inside, standing on tip-toe to do so, and then he turned and shouted—

"It's O.K. Nothing in there!"

That was where he was mistaken. Behind the overturned counter the huge bulk of the gorilla lay extended. The immense beast had eaten so much that it was almost senseless. It was sleeping as soundly as a squirrel in the winter time.

From the window Tutt Strawhan had been unable to see anything of his hairy trailer. He was quite convinced that the store was empty. He even waited in the doorway until the others joined him.

"The brute's made a rare mix-up in here. Old Garvin will have a fit when he gets back an' sees this," he muttered. "Reckon we could do with some bacon ourselves. Think we could rake some out from the wreckage? Gorillas don't eat meat. Maybe he ain't touched the bacon."

They rummaged around amongst the fallen stock on the floor, and had nearly reached the overturned counter when Strawhan found a side of bacon.

He dragged it out, examined it, and decided it was in good enough condition to cook. There was a stove in the far end of the store, and the killers proceeded to light this and get the bacon sliced.

Before long the savoury smell of frying bacon filled the store. The Strawhan Gang squatted around. They had found some bread and had a plate each. They were waiting for the bacon to be done to a turn.

So intent were they on this that they did not see the movement at the other end of the store. O'Neil had awakened!

It was the scent of the bacon in his nostrils that had roused the Six-Gun Gorilla. He remembered that smell from the days when his master had cooked breakfast in the shack up at the Dragonfly Mine.

He lifted his head and sniffed. It brought back memories. He tried to whine, but his throat was dry. He felt sick. The effects of the over-eating were still upon him.

Slowly and clumsily he raised himself and peered over the top of the counter. A murmur of voices made him glance to the other end of the store. His nostrils dilated, his eyes widened, and his hair stood on end.

There were the very men for whom he had been hunting these past few weeks. They were calmly sitting there almost within his reach!

O'Neil's lips curled back in a soundless snarl.

None of the gang looked round. The bacon was ready. Tutt Strawhan had reached for the pan

The Six-Gun Gorilla rose silently to his feet. He touched the top of the counter with two forepaws, and vaulted over as lightly as a shadow. He weighed six hundred pounds, but when he pleased he could move as quietly as a gazelle.

With measured tread he crossed the room.

Tutt Strawhan was bending down to swop the best part of the bacon on to his own plate. He always believed in taking the best share before giving the rest to his partners.

Suddenly a hand came over his shoulder and gripped the handle of the pan.

"Don't be a fool!" he snarled. "Let go, Stark. You'll get your share in a minute. If there's not enough you can cook some more. There's plenty more bacon. Let go, I say! I——"

The words died on his lips. Looking down as he wrenched at the frying-pan, he saw that the arm around him was massive and hairy. The hand was covered with long, reddish-brown hairs, too.

He turned his head, and found himself looking into the snarling face of the Six-Gun Gorilla. As for the other two men, they were so paralysed with terror that they just sat there staring.

Tutt Strawhan gave one screech, and suddenly let go the frying-pan.

O'Neil had been pulling upwards. As a result the pan came up with a rush, and the contents, bacon and hot grease, were flung in the gorilla's face.

O'Neil gave a roar of rage. The greasy bacon stuck to his face, his nose, and the top of his head. He clawed at it desperately, and as he did so Tutt Strawhan took a headlong dive through the open door.

Pete Stark and El Vado were after him a second later, but the half-breed was not quite quick enough.

Half-blinded as he was, the Six-Gun Gorilla managed to snatch out his revolver and fire at the last of the fleeing figures.

El Vado was the last man, and the shot caught him in the back of his right shoulder.

REMEMBER, BOYS!

Next week's magnificent Free "Battles for the Flag" Card is

"THE CHARGE OF THE MAHRATTA CAVALRY AT ASSAYE"

Order your "Wizard" Now and make sure of getting it!

Down on his knees he went, and rolled down the steps into the open.

His two friends did not stop for him.

The gorilla lumbered after its victim. As the doorway had been widened so effectively the night before, O'Neil passed through now without any trouble.

He bent over the wounded man, who shrieked with fear when he saw the immense brute bending over him.

O'Neil sniffed at his prisoner. He could smell blood, and that excited him, but chiefly he could smell that this was one of the men who had killed his master.

He growled, picked up El Vado with one hand, and held him in the air. With his other hand he hammered on his massive chest.

It was O'Neil's way of showing his triumph. He wanted the whole world to hear that he had captured yet another of his master's murderers.

In the distance Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark stopped and looked back. They were fascinated by what they saw. They saw O'Neil brandishing his victim as though he was a doll. They saw El Vado make desperate efforts to draw his revolver.

The gorilla saw what the half-breed was trying to do, and gave him a slap with an open hand. It looked a playful slap, but actually it broke the man's arm. El Vado started to whimper.

Gravely, as though he was a jailer or an executioner, O'Neil marched towards the nearest tree with his prisoner. He hesitated for a few moments at the foot of the tree, then reached up and pushed his prisoner across the lowest branch.

El Vado gripped the branch and hung on with his one good hand. The Six-Gun Gorilla stepped back, and drew his revolver from its holster.

"He—he's going to pump lead into El Vado!" marvelled Pete Stark.

Very gravely O'Neil took aim. He rested one end of the revolver on his crooked forearm. This was the way his master had taught him to shoot when they had done target practice together. The gorilla took careful aim at the wriggling form on the branch.

Crack! O'Neil had fired, and a shot thudded into the ruffian's body. Crack! A second shot crashed through the man's head, and he dropped limply to the ground.

The Six-Gun Gorilla roared in triumph, and started bouncing up and down as though he had gone mad.

With the knuckles of his hands touching the ground at every bound, he went up and down, up and down, until it made one dizzy to watch him.

Then he remembered his revolver. It lay smoking on the ground. His dead master had taught him to clean it after shooting, but O'Neil had always found this a difficult thing to do. He never could thread a cloth through the barrel, and, in any case, he did not have a cloth.

Instead he opened the breech, put the end of the barrel to his mouth, and blew so mightily that gunpowder, soot, and everything else in the barrel came flying out the other end.

He continued to do this until no more dust came out. It was a crude but effective way of cleaning the gun. Then he squatted down to reload.

This took him half an hour, and all the time the body of his second victim lay close at his feet.

Justice had been done according to the Six-Gun Gorilla, but there were still two more of the Strawhan Gang to be accounted for.

Murder on the Mountainside

STRAWHAN and Pete Stark had seen their friend slain, and had become panic-stricken. Instead of sticking to their previous intention of waiting and filling the gorilla with lead, they bed up the trail towards the mountains, looking round every now and again to make sure that O'Neil was not following them.

They knew full well that O'Neil followed them chiefly by his sense of smell. They decided to make his task a difficult one.

They came to a mountain stream which flowed swiftly down the mountainside. They took to this, scrambling up the riverbed, wet to the knees, sometimes almost washed backwards.

It was hard and cold work walking against the force of the current, but they knew that they were laying no scent which the gorilla could follow. If they could get to the top of the mountain in this way, they might put him off their scent altogether.

"What is it he smells about us?" asked Pete Stark. "We're not polecats."

"No, I guess it's our clothes," growled Strawhan. "Maybe it's our brand of tobacco, or the dirt we've dropped on our clothes at one time or another. It would be a good idea to get rid of these clothes an' boots."

They toyed with the idea as they struggled upwards, and at last they came to a narrow pass through which the stream flowed. They were still in this pass when they heard voices above them.

The banks of the stream were high and overhanging here, and on one bank ran a trail. Along this trail two prospectors were travelling, tramping stolidly beside their string of pack-mules. There were five mules in all, mostly laden with equipment.

The prospectors had not the slightest idea

that they were not the only men in this pass. The mules were nearest the stream, and their masters cast no glance towards it.

Strawhan whispered to his companion, and Pete Stark nodded as he drew his revolver. They crawled up the bank of the stream until they were almost on the trail. There they lay behind some bushes and waited.

The two prospectors came along, suspecting nothing. They passed the spot where the two killers lay, and, as soon as they passed two revolvers rang out.

The two prospectors dropped in their tracks. They did not even know what had hit them. They had been killed instantly.

The mules would have bolted if their reins had not become caught round the bodies of their dead masters. The beasts stood trembling as the two scoundrels came hastening to the side of their victims.

Both the prospectors were sturdy fellows, and their clothes were of the usual prospector type. The killers cold-bloodedly turned the dead men over on the side of the trail and removed their clothes and boots.

These they exchanged for their own, dressing the corpses in their own clothing, even lacing up the boots which they had discarded.

Once they had changed their clothes their spirits rose. They buckled on their revolver belts, and shook their fists down the mountainside.

"Now let's see that durned gorilla follow us after this!" chortled Pete Stark. "That's the last we'll see of him."

The two killers then searched the prospector's packs and found plenty of food. Feeling safe from immediate pursuit, they lit a fire and cooked breakfast to make up for the meal which had been interrupted.

Satisfied both with their meal and their morning's work, they presently mounted two of the mules and rode on towards the higher ranges. They were now heading for the districts where they were well known—and feared.

The morning drew on. The sun was high in the sky when at last a hairy figure came shambling up the mountain trail. It was O'Neil.

He had lost the scent on the mountainside, and had been searching for it all morning. He had never found it, but the trail leading upwards had tempted him to follow.

O'Neil was grumbling and grunting to himself as he climbed up the trail. His teeth were bared, and his fierce little eyes stared towards the mountain peaks.

Suddenly he stopped and wrinkled his nostrils. A faint scent had come down the wind, a scent which he recognised and which excited him.

It was the scent of the men he sought, mixed with something else.

He increased speed, scrambling forward with the gun dangling and bumping against his hairy thigh.

He saw two objects on the trail. Two still figures lay near the water's edge. He paused and crouched, wondering if this was a trick. He knew that men were filled with cunning and trickery.

He waited, but there came no sign of movement from these still figures. When the wind blew in his direction he scented the hated smell of the men he sought, but it was mixed with something else—blood.

Gradually O'Neil crept nearer, until finally he saw that the two men had their eyes closed. One of them lay on his back, one on his side. There was something unnatural about the way they were lying. This made the Six-Gun Gorilla suspicious.

But the hated smell drove him on, and with a final rush he pounced on them and clutched them both at the same time in his great arms.

High into the air he lifted the lifeless bodies, snarling and growling in his throat.

No movement came from his victims. They did not struggle. They did not shout.

O'Neil felt that this was uncanny. He dropped the men on to the ground and waited for them to try and run away, much as a cat might do to a mouse.

Nothing happened. They lay as they had fallen, and the puzzled gorilla bent and sniffed them all over.

Then, for the first time, O'Neil realised that they were dead. Standing at his full height, he stared about him in amazement.

How had they died? He had not killed them, and he could see no one else about.

Somehow or other he was uncertain that they were the men he sought, yet they had about them the usual scent which he had remembered ever since that fateful night at the Dragonfly Mine. It was not too strong, but it was unmistakable.

He turned the dead men this way and that, examining them in every possible way. He found their bleeding wounds, and recoiled angrily. This did not seem right.

His rage began to grow. He had followed these men all this distance with the idea of killing them to revenge his dead master. Now he found that someone had done this before him, and his temper rose against the men who had dared to do this thing.

These men who now lay dead had been his enemies! Why should someone else kill them? He felt that he had been cheated.

He nosed around the surrounding ground, and found another scent. There were tracks of mules going up the mountainside. Mingled with the smell of mules was another scent, an unknown one, but one which had a faint suggestion of something that he knew very well.

Running around on all fours, he became more and more disturbed. There was something very wrong here. Those tracks going up to the top of the ranges must be the tracks of the men who had killed his two bitterest enemies, and who had caused him to have his chase for nothing.

He now hated these men who had cheated him of his revenge. He decided to go after them.

Having made this resolve, he bent over the stream, drank deeply, then turned his head towards the top of the ranges.

Behind him lay two still bodies, the bodies of two men whom he believed to be his enemies. Something had happened to them which he could not explain, but he connected this something with the men who travelled with the mules.

There was a dull, smouldering ache at the back of his brain. All his longing for vengeance turned towards them. He still had his six-gun, and he still had ammunition. He would go after them.

So it came about that O'Neil still followed Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark without knowing it, and those two scoundrels were firmly convinced that they were in no further danger.

Quite unaware of the fact that O'Neil was still on their trail, they took their time as they crossed the ranges. In their new clothes they felt as though they had taken a new identity. They even began to talk about the gold which they had been forced to abandon at a certain coaching post far to the south, and wondered what had become of it.

It maddened them to think that they had lost such a fortune, especially as it would now only have to be shared amongst the two of them. They discussed plans as to how they might go back in search of it.

The mules followed them steadily. There was a full camping kit as well as supplies of provisions on those beasts. Tutt Strawhan and his companion decided to pretend to be prospectors until they reached the territory where they were known and feared.

So, just before nightfall, when they sighted lights ahead, they resolved to make their first attempt at deception.

"You're Jack Rolls, and I'm Peter Lewis," said Strawhan. "We're bound for Monopoly Valley looking for gold. If there's a saloon here ahead we might manage to get news of some of our pals."

Knowing that it was the end of the day's trek, the mules increased their pace when they saw the cluster of shacks and buildings ahead. The outfit pulled up outside a combined saloon and store, a place which was evidently the meeting-place of the men of the settlement, for a number of horses were already tethered outside the building.

The two killers confidently swaggered forward. Half a dozen men were waiting in the doorway, watching them curiously. Tutt Strawhan saw that there was no one there whom he recognised, tilted his hat, and grunted—

"How-do! Any chance of gettin' a hot meal in this joint? I'm Pete Lewis, an' this is Jack Rolls. That's our outfit over there. We've come a durn long way, and feel just about tuckered up."

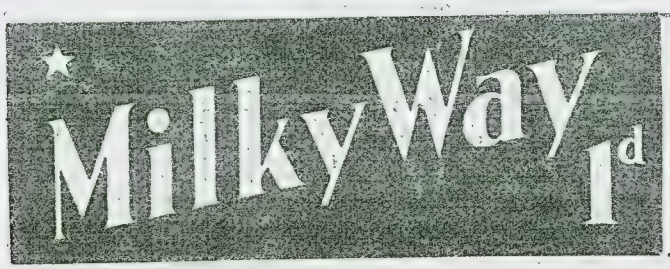
The men on the porch said nothing. Their silence was unusual. The two newcomers felt awkward.

"Reckon we can find a trough around here for our mules?" murmured Pete Stark.

"No!" The snarl came from a big man, who had suddenly whipped two guns from under the tails of his coat and was covering the two supposed prospectors closely. "Before you do anything else, you've got to explain what you've done to Tim Slade and Monty Barr. Those are their mules, and those are their clothes you're wearing. Guess there's something mighty queer here!"

Half a dozen of the miners drew guns. The two men who had committed murder in order to put the Six-Gun Gorilla off their trail now found themselves nearer death than ever.

Read next week how O'Neil is captured and left at the mercy of Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark. Don't miss this thrilling instalment, and look out for No. 7 of the FREE "Battles For The Flag" Cards!



- made by MARS -
that's the best of
CHOCOLATE BARS

Printed and Published in Great Britain by D. C. Thomson & Co., Ltd., 12 Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.
Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post.

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA IS CAPTURED! ... MEN HE IS OUT TO KILL HELP HIM TO ESCAPE!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Prisoners of the Miners

HANGING oil-lamps cast a fitful light over the porch of the crude store which also served as saloon in a far Western settlement.

It was not much of a settlement, but merely a group of shacks and cabins on the edge of the mining country.

Half a dozen men were standing in the doorway of the store when newcomers arrived with several laden mules. One of these men in the doorway whipped out a revolver and covered the newcomers.

"Answer me!" he thundered. "Where did you get them mules? Where's Tim Slade an' Monty Barr? Why are you wearin' their clothes?"

There was a snarl from the rest of the group as they closed round and twitched the guns from the belts of the new arrivals. As for these two men who had just reached the threshold of the store, their mouths sagged weakly open. They looked around like trapped beasts.

Trapped they were, and the trap was very much of their own making. Neither the clothes they wore, nor the mules and the equipment, were their rightful property. They had murdered two innocent prospectors in order to get possession of these, and had hoped to disguise themselves in order to shake a terrible pursuer off their trail.

But now Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark found themselves in a bigger mess than ever. They had been unfortunate enough to come to the very settlement where the two prospectors whom they had murdered were well known. Both the clothing and equipment were recognised.

Sweat shone on their faces as they rushed into the store and backed against the counter.

"I—I can explain! It was a mistake!" spluttered Tutt Strawhan, and to see him then no one would have believed that he had the reputation of being one of the toughest gunmen in the West. It was a different matter when he had no gun in his hand!

"Mistake! Guess it was a mistake!" growled one of the local men. "You would never have got that kit or clothes without killing our two friends. You dirty skunks! You've killed two of the straightest guys in the world. What shall we do with 'em, you men, shoot 'em or string 'em up?"

"String 'em up!" roared the rest of the miners.

"Aye, we'll rope 'em up sure enough, but first of all we'll have to wait till the sheriff gets back," said the man who had asked the question. "We won't do nothin' without him. We'll be all fair an' legal like. Best thing to do with these skunks is to put 'em in the cellar for the night. They'll be safe enough there."

So despite their protests Strawhan and Stark were seized and their arms bound. Under the store was a fairly big cellar with barrels and boxes stacked at one end. The two prisoners were pushed roughly into a corner, and told to keep quiet. No one thought of giving them food or water. Every man there was too disgusted at the idea of the two prospectors being murdered. A search-party was organised to go down the trail and look for their bodies.

Meanwhile the two prisoners in the cellar whispered hoarsely to each other. This was a stroke of bad luck which they had never expected. Bad luck had come their way frequently lately, and it was entirely of their own doing.

The Tutt Strawhan Gang had been much feared in one part of Colorado, and might still have been enjoying a good deal of power if they had not heard about old Bart Masters, who ran a small gold-mine on his own up in the Boulder Hills.

Masters had worked this mine for seven years, aided by a gorilla which he had purchased from a sailor named O'Neil.

He had called the gorilla O'Neil, and had taught it to do various odd jobs, even how to fire a revolver. One night Masters had decided to abandon the mine and go back to civilisation, but he had been murdered by the Strawhan Gang who had also wounded O'Neil, and made off with the miner's gold.

When O'Neil had recovered, and discovered that his master was dead, he had buckled on his master's gun-belt and bandolier and had set out on the trail of the murdering gang.

The trail had led for hundreds of miles. The Six-Gun Gorilla had hounded the killers from place to place, had forced them to abandon the gold, and had already killed two of them, and had so terrified Strawhan and Stark that these two had resolved to disguise themselves in some way to try to shake him off the scent.

That was why they had murdered Tim Slade and Monty Barr, and why they had donned the clothes of their victims. They believed that the gorilla would find the bodies and mistake them for their own, because of the scent of the clothes.

At the time it had seemed a brilliant plan. They had congratulated themselves upon it. Now they thought differently. These furious miners were going to hang them just as soon as the sheriff came back. It was not much use having escaped the Six-Gun Gorilla in order to be hanged.

The two prisoners struggled desperately with their bonds, and finally Tutt Strawhan managed to get one hand free. He released himself, then freed Pete Stark, but after that the killers could go no further. The only exit from the cellar was through the trap-door in the floor of the saloon, and over their heads they could hear the men of the settlement tramping about and talking.

"We'll have to wait till everyone's gone for the night. Guess we can lift that trap from underneath," muttered Strawhan. "No good getting panicky yet. We'll make a get-away before the sheriff comes back."

A crack of light showed through the boarding overhead, but that was the only light the two captives had in the darkness of the cellar. Time seemed to be endless.

The men above were expecting their sheriff back that night some time or other, and intended to wait up for him and to tell him about the tragedy. They were also awaiting the return of the search-party which had been sent out for the bodies of the two prospectors.

"Here he comes! Here's the sheriff."

All heads turned towards the doorway. All the men rose expectantly from the tables at which they had been sitting, but the door did not open. Instead, there came a low knocking.

"Come in!" shouted half a dozen men at once.

The door was not opened. Again the knocking sounded. One of the miners lost his patience, and strode the length of the room.

"Who in heck is it?" he grunted, as he flung the door wide. "It's a free country. Walk in."

It was very dark outside. All he could see was a bulky shape at the top of the two steps leading from the trail. Nearby some tethered horses were kicking and rearing in evident fear.

"Come on in, mister!" sang out the miner. "We thought it was our sheriff. Did you see anything of him on the trail?"

His voice tailed away hoarsely, for the bulky shape at the top of the steps had lumbered forward. The startled miner found himself staring at a huge shaggy chest.

Backing away, vainly trying to cry some alarm to his friends in the saloon the man at the door saw a terrible face appear in the lamp-light.

It was like something out of a nightmare, with flat nose, wide mouth, gleaming teeth, and reddish, glaring eyes. It was the face of a gorilla.

The startled miner's eyes nearly popped out of his head as he staggered back into the saloon trying to gasp out the alarm.

The gorilla followed him up, occasionally lowering a hand to the floor to steady itself, but usually managing to walk erect. The doorway was wide, but one of the doorposts was knocked over at a drunken angle as the visitor stepped inside.

The occupants of the saloon stared at the strange figure unbelievingly. They had never seen a gorilla in Colorado before. Few of the men there even knew what the beast was. Even those who did recognise the beast were stunned with amazement when they saw the gun-belt, with the heavy six-gun, and the bandolier of cartridges slung around the animal's shoulder.

"What in heck——?" exploded someone.

Some of the men reached for their guns, but directly they did that the gorilla did the same.

Face twisted in a fiendish snarl, the gun held in a huge paw, the Six-Gun Gorilla walked the length of the store, looking to right and left with those keen reddish-brown eyes.

He was sniffing the air as though he scented something or someone he recognised. A deep rumble came from his throat. Every hair on his body seemed to bristle. He was in a towering rage.

The two prisoners in the cellar were speechless with horror. They had heard everything that had happened up in the saloon, and now heard the floor boards creaking ominously under the weight of the intruder.

The gun, and the face behind it, fascinated the terrified settlers. They pressed themselves further and further back against the counter in the saloon, and stared. Not one of them tried a shot. They were almost paralysed with fear.

REGIMENTAL MASCOTS

Bobby of the Berkshire Regiment.

Bobby was a small, white-haired terrier and was born in Malta, where The Royal Berkshire Regiment was stationed. He accompanied the Berkshires to India, and when the 2nd Afghan War broke out and the regiment was ordered to the front, Bobby went with the troops to Kandahar in Afghanistan.

While here, news was received that a hostile chief with a great army was moving on Kandahar, and the Berkshires were sent out to meet him at a village called Maiwand. The British were overwhelmingly outnumbered, but Bobby was well to the front, barking at the Afghans. At last only eleven soldiers and Bobby were left.

After the battle the dog found his way back to Kandahar, where he joined some of the wounded men of the Berkshires, who had somehow managed to escape the Afghans.

At Maiwand Bobby was badly wounded in the back, and this left a large and ugly scar. To hide this Bobby wore a smart red coat when he returned to England in 1881. He was awarded the Afghan medal and it was placed round his neck by Queen Victoria herself.

(World Copyright Reserved.)

On next week's thrilling "Battle Card" you will see the Berkshires in action at Maiwand, with Bobby, their mascot, in the middle of the fight.

Don't miss this sensational picture.

The gorilla reached them, put out a huge paw, and thrust two of them to one side. He leaned over the counter and looked behind it.

The store-keeper had ducked behind cover of the counter at the first glimpse of the intruder. O'Neil reached over with a long arm, caught hold of the man's belt, and lifted him straight into view.

He held him in the air for inspection, sniffed him all over doubtfully, whilst the man trembled like a leaf, then dropped him lightly on to the floor.

The Six-Gun Gorilla's lips curled back in a snarl. He could not understand it. He could smell the men he wanted, yet they were not here!

He stamped about the room, peering in odd corners. He tried to open a cupboard, and the door came off in his huge hand.

The men in the saloon did not dare stir. They now realised that this nightmare gunman had no intention of harming them as long as they did not interfere with him in any way as he searched the building. What he was looking for they could not imagine.

The Capture of O'Neil

WHILE O'Neil was searching for them up in the saloon, the two shivering men in the cellar had a terrifying time. They strained their ears for every sound. Twice the gorilla walked over the trap-door, and they wondered if his keen powers of scent would enable him to detect them down there.

Minutes passed. They heard growls and snarls. The Six-Gun Gorilla was getting more and more angry as the mystery of the missing men grew.

He caught hold of the edge of a window, and pulled it off. He was going to start tearing down the store in order to look for the hidden pair.

Woodwork crumpled and snapped under his touch. The men in the saloon watched, not knowing what do do. They did not want to see the place wrecked, but they were scared to interfere.

Then, suddenly, from outside there came the sound of a cantering horse. It stopped outside the saloon. Someone leapt from the saddle, and a moment later there was the sound of a footstep on the porch.

The door of the saloon was already open, and now through it there stepped a big, grim-faced man with a wide-brimmed hat on the back of his head. A badge showed in the lapel of his mackinaw jacket. It was a sheriff's badge.

"Why, folks, what's the idea?" he began. "Why are——? Huh!"

He had just seen the gigantic intruder. O'Neil had turned to the sheriff and pointed his gun at him. He had wondered if the newcomer could be one of the men he sought, but one glance was enough to tell him otherwise. He stared at the startled sheriff for a few seconds, then turned his back on him.

Sheriff Brewster released the breath which he had been shocked into holding. Some of the men in the background were making frantic signs for him to keep quiet.

But Sheriff Brewster was not that sort of man. He saw O'Neil punch a great hole in the wall and reach through as though groping for something.

"Hey, what does this mean?" roared the representative of the law.

O'Neil turned and showed his teeth. He did not trust this man by the door. He raised his gun again, and this time he would have pressed the trigger, but Sheriff Brewster whipped out his gun like lightning and fired.

The six-gun was shot from the gorilla's fingers. For a few seconds O'Neil stared dumbly at his empty hand, which had been numbed by the impact of the sheriff's bullet on his own gun.

"At him, boys!" yelled Brewster. "He must have escaped from a circus or somewhere. At him!"

As he spoke he whisked a rope from his belt and cleverly hurled a noose over O'Neil's head. A jerk caused the gorilla to drop on all fours, tearing at the choking rope, and roaring so loudly that everyone in the store was almost deafened.

Now that the sheriff had given the miners a lead, he had plenty of helpers. The miners were not cowards. They made a simultaneous rush, and one of them picked up a heavy wooden stool which he whirled in the air as a club. Crash! He brought it down with all his force on the gorilla's head. Even O'Neil was affected by such a blow. The gorilla grunted, dropped its arms loosely to its side, and shook its head.

Crash! Again the brawny miner brought down the stool, and this time O'Neil rolled over on his side with a despairing groan. He was knocked out.

"Ropes, an' plenty of 'em!" grunted the sheriff, curtly.

There was no lack of ropes. The miners brought dozens of them, and by the time they had finished trussing O'Neil he looked like a fly wrapped in a spider's web. He was completely covered by ropes.

For the first time the men in the saloon had a chance to size up O'Neil, and marvel at his dimensions. He was well over six feet tall, and his chest measurement was about twice that of a normal man.

His gun-belt and bandolier had still been left on, and were now under the ropes. The men pointed at these and wondered how O'Neil had got hold of such things.

The only explanation they could think of was that the gorilla must have escaped from a circus and made its way here to the

hills. They began to wonder if there was a reward offered for its capture.

"Someone's got to pay for all this damage!" wailed the store-keeper.

The miners gave him a hand to tidy up. It was impossible to make proper repairs that night, but they did their best, and by the time they had finished it was two o'clock in the morning.

They were all so busy, and so excited about the capture of their amazing visitor, that they completely forgot about the men in the cellar.

O'Neil had not recovered by the time the store had been tidied. He still lay helplessly in the corner where he had been dragged, and after again examining the knots, the sheriff decided that it would be safe to leave him there for the rest of the night.

"If he makes a fuss to-morrow, we'll have to shoot him," he declared.

So the men went to their shacks and cabins to get some much-needed sleep, and the sheriff locked and barred the door of the store before doing likewise.

Silence descended on the little settlement.

Down in the cellar the two prisoners had tried to gather from the conversation of the men above just what was happening. They had heard the capture of the gorilla with great delight, and had hoped that the miners would immediately shoot it.

They knew that they would never be safe until O'Neil was dead.

Then everyone had gone away, and the two prisoners looked at each other in the darkness. They whispered together. It was their chance of escape.

Stealthily, they began to pile boxes one upon the other, and Tutt Strawhan climbed on top of this heap. From there he reached up to the trap-door in the floor, and heaved with all his might.

The trap-door creaked loudly as it rose, and Tutt Strawhan nearly let it drop with fear. He managed to check this impulse in time, and listened to find out whether the noise had been heard.

From somewhere nearby came the sound of deep, slow breathing. There was no other sound. None of the other residents of the place seemed to be stirring. The store-keeper had accepted the invitation of a friend to sleep in his shack instead of remaining at the store with the gorilla.

Tutt Strawhan heaved himself out on to the floor of the store. There was a full moon that night, and it shone into the store. Strawhan saw a dark mass in the corner, and shuddered. He knew that it was the Six-Gun Gorilla.

Turning, the killer whispered to Stark to join him, and they stood together, staring at the huddled beast in the shadows. Was it their fancy, or were two fierce eyes watching them?

Minutes passed, and Strawhan wiped the moisture from his face.

"Come on! Let's get out o' here," he growled.

They crept to the door of the store, and made the unpleasant discovery that it was barred on the outside. They turned to one of the windows, and Pete Stark lifted a bench in order to climb on it to examine the window fastenings.

Something lay on the floor under the bench. It was a revolver which one of the miners had dropped in the excitement.

Stark picked it up and felt to make sure that it was fully loaded, then he whispered excitedly to his companion. They both stared at the bound gorilla in the corner. O'Neil was not watching them. He had not yet fully recovered from these terrific blows on the head.

"Why not finish him now we have the chance?" suggested Pete Stark.

"Yeah, I reckon we ought to take the chance, but get that window open first so that we can make a quick getaway," growled Strawhan. "See if there's any cash in the till."

Stark rifled the till and got the window open in readiness, with the bench underneath it to aid them in a quick getaway. All was set for the killing of the gorilla.

Silently they approached O'Neil. They could make out only a dark blur as he slumped in that corner, his head lolling over on one side. Pete Stark raised the gun, but his hand shook so much that Tutt Strawhan took the weapon from him.

"Let me do it!" he snarled. "Stand back! I'll plug him just where his heart ought to be."

Strawhan took careful aim, then pulled trigger. The sound of the shot was deafening in that enclosed space, and it was followed by a snarl from the gorilla.

The revolver cracked viciously again and again as Tutt Strawhan pumped in shot after shot. He aimed them all more or less in the same place.

Long before he had finished firing the Six-Gun Gorilla was roused and struggling madly to free himself from his bonds. There was a hot pain at the side of his neck, and another at the top of his massive left arm. Several other bullets had hit home, but not in the gorilla. Strawhan had been unable to see the bandolier of cartridges in the darkness. The bullets had mostly been embedded in this.

But O'Neil had suffered enough pain from the bullets to make him mad with anger. The noise, the flashes in his face, the scent of the men he hated, and the fact that he found himself tied by ropes, drove him into a frenzy.

Strong as the ropes were, they could not stand up to the strength of the Six-Gun Gorilla and one by one they began to snap. The two men waited for no more. They made a dash for the window, and scrambled through.

Once outside the saloon, they took to their heels and ran for their lives. All around them men were shouting from their windows, asking what was wrong. The shots had roused the little settlement, and the miners hurriedly dressed as they prepared to run and find out what was going on.

Menace in the Mine-Shaft

THE Six-Gun Gorilla made short work of most of the ropes, but there was one very thick one running between his crooked elbows from behind which he could not break. He staggered about the floor, straining and struggling with this rope, sometimes falling over, sometimes crashing into furniture or shelves which promptly collapsed.

The miners who had arrived outside the saloon listened to this din grimly. They thought that there was someone in there engaged in a desperate struggle with the monster. They could not think who it could be, but they stood by to give what aid they could as the sheriff opened the door.

"Who's there? Who wants help?" shouted the sheriff.

The Six-Gun Gorilla was rolling on the floor. The voice was so close to him that it forced him to make greater efforts. He gave an extra hard tug, and the one remaining rope snapped at last.

O'Neil staggered backwards, unable to stop himself, and crashed against the long-suffering wall of the store, which promptly gave under the strain and allowed him to roll into the open. He was up on his feet in a minute and running for the cover of some bushes.

"There he is! There he goes!" roared half a dozen men at once, and several revolvers were fired in the direction of the running beast.

O'Neil heard the bullets whining about him, and instinctively reached to his holster for his gun in order to fire back. He found no gun. He had forgotten that he had lost it.

He hesitated, as if he was going to turn back and look for the gun, but more of the bullets whistling about him warned him that that would be dangerous.

He scrambled amongst the bushes under the trees, and crouched there, snarling.

The miners were reluctant to follow him into the darkness. They contented themselves with firing several volleys in his direction, and then one of the men remembered the two prisoners.

The discovery that these prisoners had escaped was soon made and the sheriff began to put two and two together. The first shots had evidently been fired by the escaping men, and for some reason they had tried to kill the gorilla. There was blood on the floor of the saloon.

The sheriff would not do much that night, for it was too dark to see any tracks, but there and then he raised a posse which was to take up the pursuit at dawn. Sheriff Brewster was determined to get the two killers.

He raised another party of men armed with rifles to go out after the gorilla when daylight came, and so put an end to the beast's career. A wounded gorilla was not a pleasant thing to have roaming about the district.

Those were the plans the miners made around the damaged store, and they did not guess that the gorilla was crouching no more than twenty yards from them.

O'Neil had been trying to find out if the men he sought were amongst these men at the store. He soon discovered that his enemies were not there and he would have hunted around for a fresh trail if he had not been worried about the loss of his gun.

He connected that gun with his dead master. It had been part of old Bart Masters, and O'Neil did not intend losing it. His wounds did not worry him very much, though there was caked blood on his chest.

He began to creep in closer to the crowd of miners. The sheriff had just organised his posse and had detailed two men to remain

TO STAMP COLLECTORS

Closely-set Advertisements will be inserted in WIZARD under above heading at the prepaid rate of 3d per word per insertion. Spaced Advertisements 25/- per inch per insertion.

STAMPS.—300 different, including Airmail, beautiful uncommon sets, pictorials, Colonials. You'll be delighted. Price 6d. White, Stamps, Lye, Stourbridge.

ASTRID Packet Free.—Astrid (mourning) stamp, obsolete Morocco, Agencies (Windsor), fine set scarce Airmail, Belgium Tin Hat, Roumania (King Charles), 50 different, new large anniversary stamp. Remember we give 50% discount. Enclose 2d and request approvals. Robinson Bros. (D), Moreton, Wirral.

12/6 FREE. 38 stamps cataloguing 12/6, including 12 K.G. VI., Jubilees, Coronations, Abyssinia, Congo, Manchukuo, to approval applicants sending 2d. Cockrill, 13 Montrell Rd., London, S.W.2.

MANY rare stamps have been found in the "Diamond" packet, which contains approx. 1000 unsorted stamps from convents abroad. 1s 6d post free. (Abroad 2s 6d.) Beware of imitations. Nerush (Dept. W.), 68 Turnpike Lane, London, N.8.

508 STAMPS free! Mozambique, Bulgaria, Roumania, Greece, Brazil, etc. 2d postage. Request approvals. E. Eastick, 22 Bankside Road, Bournemouth.

FREE. 500 stamps. Request approvals. Postage 3d. Holdsworth, 77 High St., Walthamstow.

OUTFIT FREE

This extraordinary offer includes 100 Titles of Countries, Perforation Measurer, ALBUM, new Price List, 32 different stamps, including Airmail (Biplane), stamp Mounts, Stamps from Philippines, Australasians, Hungarians and Czechoslovakians. To the first 500 applicants two large Moroccans (including Duke of Windsor) and two unused COLONIAL issues. Just send 2d postage, requesting approvals. (Airmail postage abroad 6d.)

LISBURN & TOWNSEND (W), Liverpool, 3.

LIBERIA PACKET FREE!

Contains 2 grand bi-coloured stamps from LIBERIA, a mint TRIANGULAR (cat. 1/3), and an animal pictorial (Bongo), new SOMALI COAST (mosque), obs. K.G. V., surcharged issues from BURMA and GWALIOR, 2 ROUMANIA (aviation fund), old IRAN (cat. 1/-), mint TURKEY (Leander's Tower), 2 AUSTRALIA commems. (Anzac and Silver Jubilee), K.G. VI. stamps from Canada and India, large U.S.A. commem., 138 GREENLAND (1st issue of this country), etc. FREE only to those who ask for approvals and enclose 2d postage and packing (overseas or without approvs. 1/- P.O.).

HELY HUTCHINSON (W.26), Hurrock Wood, Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands, Lancs.

on watch over the settlement for the rest of the night.

"The gorilla might come back," he said. "If he does, don't take any chances. Just shoot him. The remainder of us ought to get a few hours' sleep if we're going to be up at dawn."

As the sheriff did much of the talking it was only natural that the gorilla's attention should be directed more to him than to the other men. It was Sheriff Brewster the gorilla followed with his eyes when he saw the men disperse.

O'Neil noticed the guns dangling at the man's side, and wondered if his was in one of those holsters. He noted the shack the man entered, and nodded his shaggy head grimly.

He also saw the two men who were acting as sentries, and he guessed what they were waiting for. He took very good care to avoid them when presently he entered the settlement.

For so ponderous a beast he could move with remarkable quietness. No one heard him as he approached the back of the sheriff's shack.

He peered through one of the windows. Sheriff Brewster was asleep, but he had not troubled to undress. He lay extended on his bunk. The only thing he had removed was his gun-belt. With two guns in it, the belt lay on a table close to the bunk.

O'Neil noticed all this, and observed the open window. Cautiously he reached through the window with one of his long arms. Unnaturally long, this arm crossed the sleeping sheriff without waking him, and a moment later the gun-belt was in the gorilla's grip.

O'Neil lifted it quietly through the window, crouched down on the ground, and examined the guns. He peered at them and sniffed them, then withdrew one from its holster He had recognised it as his own. The sheriff had stuck it there with the intention of examining it when he had more time.

O'Neil grunted with delight, turned, and glided away amongst the surrounding trees. No one was any the wiser that he had been in the settlement. The unwanted gun-belt, with the other revolver, lay where he had dropped it.

Once under cover of the trees, O'Neil sought a patch of moonlight, and examined his gun afresh. He wanted to see if it had been harmed in any way. He fussed over it as a mother might fuss over a baby.

Then he proceeded to "clean" it. He had seen his master clean his gun in the old days, but was not quite expert enough to do this properly. Instead, he blew mightily down the barrel to get rid of surplus gunpowder, then wiped the gun on his hairy thigh.

After that he reloaded it, a slow and clumsy business for O'Neil, but one he usually managed to effect without much difficulty.

Then once again he replaced the gun in its holster, reared his mighty figure erect, and went in search of the trail left by the two runaway killers.

Nothing could ever shake his determination to run those down killers of his master. Even if he had to spend the rest of his life hunting them, he intended doing so.

It did not matter to him that the light was poor. He did not so much see their tracks as smell them. The scent of those two men was stamped forever on his memory. He could never forget it.

At last he came upon it amongst the bushes, and settled down like some huge, relentless bloodhound to follow up his enemies. He had an extra score to settle now, the pains in his neck and arm, where the bullets had penetrated. Even yet his arm throbbed when he swung it.

But pain meant very little to O'Neil. He hurried on through the darkness of the night, sometimes under trees, sometimes on the trail which ran to a bigger mining centre some distance ahead.

The moon was setting, and it was rapidly getting darker. For that reason the two men in front did not see O'Neil until he was almost on them.

He might have come right up to them, and seized them in his terrible arms, if he had not been so impatient. As soon as he sighted them he drew his gun, pointed it in their direction and fired.

Crack! The report, and the whistle of the shot over their heads, warned them of danger. One glance they gave over their shoulders and then their faces twisted with horror.

The gorilla which they had believed dead was right on their heels! It seemed impossible and fantastic, but there it was. They could not deny it.

Ahead of them they saw a cluster of buildings. It was the mining centre towards which they had been heading all night. They had hoped to steal supplies and another gun there, but now their only thought was of shelter.

They ran as they had never run before. The Six-Gun Gorilla put on a burst of speed, but was still a bit behind them when they reached the top of a mine-shaft which ran down under the foot of the hill.

It was a big shaft, the biggest in the district. A little party of about a dozen miners had clubbed together to dig it, and had rigged up an overhead gear of a crude but effective kind.

The desperate men saw no other refuge. Perhaps if they got down the mine and hid, they might escape the gorilla after all.

They reached the top of the shaft before the gorilla had turned the end of a great pile of earth which had been dug up. The usual iron bucket, of huge dimensions, hung suspended over the shaft.

Tutt Strawhan thrust at the lever which held the hoist locked in position, and once the rope was freed, the weight of the bucket carried it to the bottom of the shaft with a rush.

"Come on!" he gasped, and swung himself out on to the rope, sliding down so quickly that he skinned his hands.

Pete Stark was not going to be left behind. He was on the rope barely a second later than his partner.

They were about halfway down the rope, which was still vibrating, when O'Neil arrived at the side of the shaft.

The gorilla had his gun in his fist, but when he saw that vibrating rope he put the weapon back in its holster, and reached for the iron handle of the hoist.

He had been well-trained how to use this. Bart Masters had used the gorilla's great strength to hoist the buckets of ore from the bottom of his small mine.

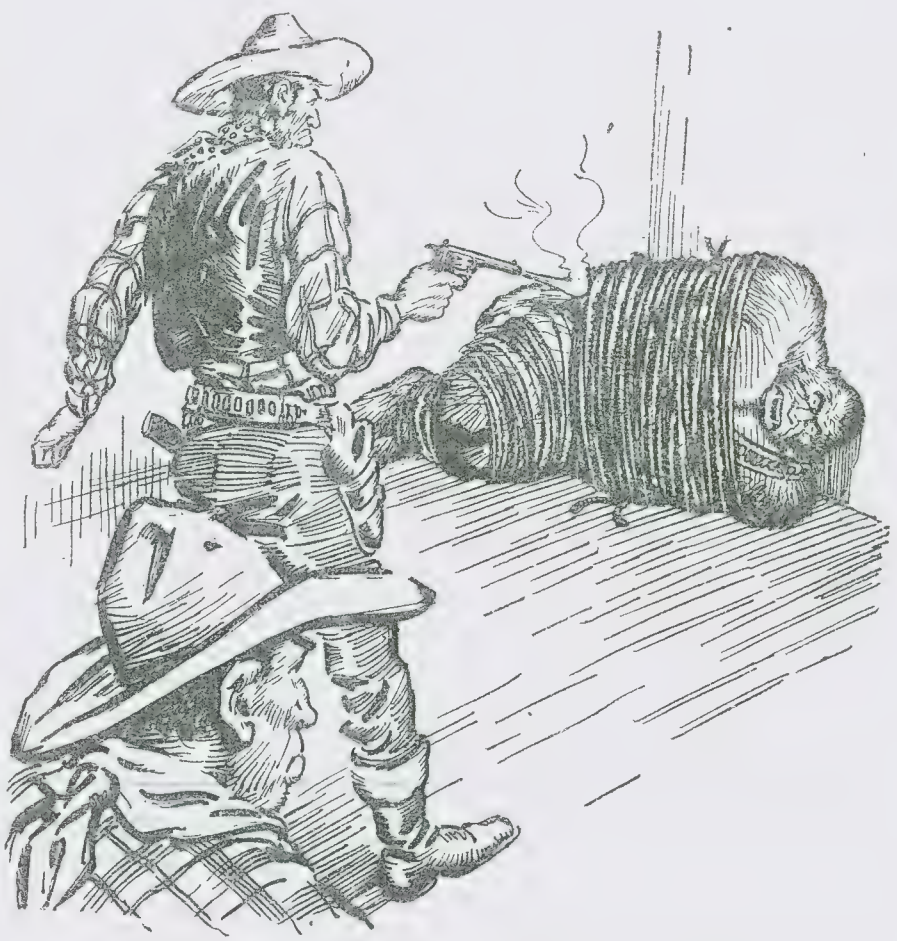
The Six-Gun Gorilla knew full well that the two men he hunted were on this rope. His teeth gleamed between his parted lips as he began to turn the handle.

A startled yell came from the shaft. Tutt Strawhan, who had almost reached the bottom of the shaft, found himself being wound up again!

Pete Stark more than halfway down, suddenly tightened his grip on the rope and held on, frightened by the movement. He was also rapidly rising towards the top of the shaft.

Then the men looked up, and saw the monstrous shadow of the Six-Gun Gorilla as he turned the handle. They realised what was happening, and their faces became grey with fright.

They could do nothing to help themselves. If they released their hold they would be dashed to pieces at the bottom of the shaft. If they continued to hang on they would be drawn up into the arms of the waiting gorilla!



Shot after shot Tutt Strawhan fired at the helpless O'Neil. It looked as if the Six-Gun Gorilla's vengeance trail had come to an end!

Don't miss next week's thrill-a-minute instalment of this great story, boys, and make sure your "Wizard" contains "The Heroic Stand At Malwand." It's FREE!

Twenty miners, a sheriff and his deputies, and the Six-Gun Gorilla will do [illegible] and Pete Stark to justice—WHICH OF THEM WILL SUCCEED?

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Horror at the Windlass

TWO wide-eyed, grey-faced men clung to the rope which was used for lowering buckets down a Colorado mine-shaft.

The mine was on the extreme outskirts of a mining camp, and one of the biggest in the district. A dozen miners had formed a little syndicate to work it, but at that hour of the day, just about dawn, they were still in their shacks.

The rope was being rapidly wound up on the drum at the top. Powerful arms were turning the handle, and making light work of the two men and the heavy bucket.

Those arms were not human arms, however. Looking up, the two terrified men clinging to the rope could see a monstrous, crouching shadow cast by the figure that worked the windlass. It was the shadow of a giant gorilla!

It was to escape this gorilla that Tutt Strawhan and Pete Stark had sought refuge in the mine. For more than a month now they had been fleeing from it, and now it had cornered them.

Tutt Strawhan had been the head of the most feared gang in Colorado, and still would have been if he had not heard about old Bart Masters, who had worked a small gold-mine up in the Boulder Hills.

Masters had worked that mine for seven years, aided by a gorilla which he had purchased from a sailor named O'Neil.

The prospector had called the gorilla O'Neil, and had taught it to do various odd jobs, even how to fire a revolver. One night Masters had decided to abandon the mine and return to civilisation, but he had been murdered by the Strawhan gang, who had also wounded O'Neil and made off with the miner's gold.

When O'Neil had recovered and discovered that his master was dead, he had buckled on Bart Masters' gun-belt and bandolier, and had set out on the trail of the murderers.

The trail had led for hundreds of miles. The Six-Gun Gorilla had hounded Strawhan and his comrades from place to place, had forced them to abandon the gold, had already killed two of them, and had so terrified Strawhan and Stark that they had resolved to disguise themselves in some way to try and put him off the scent.

For that reason, they had murdered Tim Slade and Monty Barr, two innocent prospectors, and had changed clothes with them. Unfortunately, their new clothing and equipment had been recognised by the inhabitants of a small settlement which they had visited, and they had been seized and imprisoned. There was not the slightest doubt that they would have been hanged for murder, but O'Neil had arrived on their trail, and in the confusion they had escaped—with the gorilla still close behind!

Now the two killers were faced with two terrible alternatives. They either had to let go the rope and fall to the bottom of the shaft, where they would surely be killed, or hang on and be drawn up into the arms of the waiting gorilla.

There was little time to choose. The rope was being wound in so rapidly that Pete Stark, who was above Strawhan on the rope, was rapidly approaching the top of the shaft.

"What shall we do, Tutt?" he gasped. "What shall we do?"

At that moment a long, hairy arm came out of the gloom. O'Neil had realised that one of the men was within his reach. Retaining his hold on the windlass with one hand, O'Neil grabbed Pete Stark by the collar, and lifted him clear of the rope.

Pete Stark no longer had any choice in the matter. O'Neil banged him down on the ground, and set one hairy hind-foot on him. Pinned in that helpless fashion, the gunman could not escape. He could not even scream. His power of speech seemed to have vanished.

O'Neil continued to turn the handle of the windlass, and just then there came a shout from behind. One of the miners had heard the unusual sound at dawn, and had come to see what was happening.

He was just in time to see the bucket reach the top of the shaft, and the gorilla reach out for Tutt Strawhan. The leader of the once dreaded gang screamed lustily, and tried to cling on to the bucket. He might just as well have tried to hold against the pull of a crane. The strength of O'Neil was more than equal to that of six men. He wrenched Tutt Strawhan's hands away from the bucket, and snatched him to his chest.

Holding the wriggling man in a grip from which there was no escape, O'Neil turned to face the newcomer, a ruddy-faced miner whose eyes opened wide with horror when he saw the strange scene before him.

It was a sight to strike terror into even the bravest of men. O'Neil had one man pinned under his foot, and the other clasped to his hairy chest. His lips were parted to reveal his long fangs. A low growl came from the depths of his throat.

"Help!" croaked the miner. "What—who are you?"

"Shoot him!" shrieked Tutt Strawhan, nearly crushed flat by the embrace of one powerful arm. "He's dangerous. He'll kill everyone in the camp. Shoot him!"

But the miner was not armed. He had come straight from his bunk when he had heard the creaking of the windlass. All he could get in the way of weapons was a long, iron crowbar which he flourished in menacing fashion.

O'Neil stopped growling. His free hand jerked the revolver from its holster, and a second later a shot whizzed past the astonished miner's head.

That was too much for the miner. To come face to face with a gorilla was bad enough, but to encounter a gorilla that fired a revolver was enough to send anyone crazy. The miner turned and ran for the settlement, shouting at the top of his voice.

O'Neil returned the smoking gun to his holster, and turned his attention to his two helpless prisoners. They had given up all hope. Pete Stark was whining and moaning, but Tutt Strawhan was silent.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had got both his men at once, and he was considering what to do to them. He could have pulled them to pieces there and then. He could have crushed the life out of them in two short seconds, but that did not satisfy him.

He wanted to make them suffer for what they had done to his beloved master. He roared with fury. His natural instincts came to the fore again. He would take them to the top of a high tree and drop them head-first.

The trouble was that there were no high trees anywhere around this camp. There were only small, weedy pines.

O'Neil tucked one prisoner under either arm and shambled forward, his gun flapping against his hairy thigh. He turned his head this way and that, looking for the sort of tree to which he had been accustomed in the African jungle.

But this was Colorado, and, high up in the mountains, almost out of the timber-belt. There was no decent-sized tree in sight.

Suddenly O'Neil became conscious of an uproar. A group of about twenty men was running towards him. They were the miners from the camp who had been aroused by the man who had come to investigate the creaking windlass.

They were a tough-looking crowd, armed with shotguns, revolvers, axes, anything they could lay their hands on. They were making a great deal of noise, possibly with the intention of scaring O'Neil.

As a matter of fact, the noise they were making only angered him. He stopped and turned to face them. He meant to draw his revolver and fire at them, but found it impossible to reach for his gun whilst he held a man under either arm.

The sight of his hideous face had checked the advance of the miners, however. They kept a respectable distance away, not daring to shoot for fear of hitting the two prisoners.

O'Neil slowly backed away. He still wanted a tree for execution purposes. A glance had told him that there was none to be found higher up the slopes. He started off downhill in the opposite direction.

Waddling along, balancing himself on his hind-legs, he was an amazing sight. Both victims under his arms were silent now. They had realised that it was useless to shout.

Then one of the miners had an idea. At some time or other he had worked as a cowboy, and he knew how to use a lasso. He fashioned a loop in a stout rope, and crept after the gorilla. O'Neil did not pay much attention to this puny creature. He was too busy looking for a tall tree.

The plucky miner got close enough for his purpose, and threw the rope. Accurately, it fell over the head of O'Neil, and settled round his thick, hairy neck. The miner gave a jerk, and an appalling roar came from the gorilla.

Just for a moment he dropped Tutt Strawhan, and snatched at the rope. One twist from his powerful fingers, and it snapped as though it was a thread.

Strawhan had started to crawl away on hands and knees, but he was not quick enough. A great hairy hand caught him by the belt from behind, and jerked him back again. Once more he was a prisoner.

An extra loud snarl from the angered gorilla warned the miner not to make another attempt like that, then the vast beast rapidly descended the hill, followed at a safe distance by the miners.

For about half a mile they followed him, then O'Neil stopped and sniffed the air suspiciously. He could smell men in front, although he could not see anyone.

Men just then meant enemies. His teeth parted. He roared a challenge to all the world.

"I've got my victims! Just try to come and take them away!" he seemed to say.

Five minutes later a party of horsemen rode out from under the trees. There were nearly a dozen of them, headed by a big, determined man with a sheriff's star on his jacket pocket.

This was the posse raised by Sheriff Brewster to follow Strawhan and Stark from the little settlement where they had been recognised as wearing the clothing of the missing prospectors. Ever since early dawn the posse had been trailing the fugitives across country. They had arrived at a dramatic moment.

O'Neil stopped on the slope.

The sheriff reined in his horse, which immediately began to plunge. In front were the men for whom the sheriff was looking, but they were in the hands of something much more terrible than the hands of the law.

Gasps of amazement came from the posse. They felt for their guns, then realised that they could not use them without endangering the lives of the men they intended to bring to justice.

The stage-coach passengers gazed in terror and wonder at the amazing bandit who had held up the coach to steal a box of oranges.

It was a queer situation. Those two killers deserved death, and they would certainly die at the hands of the gorilla. But the law decreed that they must die in another way, with a rope round their necks. Big Sheriff Brewster was the type of man to insist upon the law being carried out.

Tree-Top Vengeance

SO, with a score of men in front of him and a score behind, O'Neil remained master of the situation. Further down the slope, beyond the posse, he now saw the sort of tree he wanted, an Oregon pine towering upwards for more than a hundred feet. He gave a grunt of satisfaction, and started towards the posse. They would have stood their ground, but their horses refused. They reared, bucked, struggled to bolt, and eventually some of them did get away.

The men in the posse were so busy controlling their frightened steeds that they had no time to deal with the gorilla, which passed through their midst unharmed.

"Stop him!" shouted the miners from behind, but they did not suggest how this might be done.

The Six-Gun Gorilla increased his speed. He was anxious to get this business over. The tree he was heading for was half a mile away, but it would not take him long to reach it.

Sheriff Brewster did not know what was in the great beast's mind, but he had an idea that if the gorilla got a start on them it might escape altogether. He spurred his horse after the great creature, and, with a good deal of snorting the beast obeyed.

The horse's hoofs clattered loudly on the hard ground, and O'Neil spun about with a grunt. At point-blank range the sheriff fired his revolver, and one of the heavy bullets struck home.

It struck the gorilla's breast bone, and was turned aside, but it inflicted a painful wound, and so angered O'Neil that he dropped Tutt Strawhan once more and reached for his gun.

Crack-crack! He fired twice in quick succession, and more by luck than anything else his second bullet brought down the horse which the sheriff rode.

It had all happened so suddenly that Brewster had no chance of saving himself from a heavy fall. He crashed on his head and lay still for a moment. O'Neil roared with triumph, and looked round for Tutt Strawhan.

But this time the gunman had wriggled out of sight under some bushes, and O'Neil could not see him. Clasping Pete Stark to his chest, the infuriated gorilla looked this way and that, sniffing the air to try and pick up Strawhan's scent.

The miners and the members of the posse who had got their mounts under control came rushing forward, shooting their guns in the air. They had decided to try and frighten O'Neil away from at least one of his victims, and they succeeded.

The Six-Gun Gorilla tried to fire back

them, but his gun was empty, and the hammer clicked down on the empty chambers.

For the time being O'Neil was baffled and scared. So much noise was going on that he did not know which way to turn. Then he remembered—the giant pine.

With one mighty bound he got out of the circle of men, and fled down the hill, but he did not drop Pete Stark. He kept him in such a tight grip that the man could not even shout for help.

In the excitement Tutt Strawhan crawled a couple of hundred yards, then doubled back and raced for the mining settlement. He was cute enough to realise that with all the miners out hunting O'Neil, he had a splendid chance to steal guns and supplies.

The men were so eager to corner the gorilla that they lost their chance of seizing Strawhan immediately after his escape. They surged down the hill after the leaping gorilla, and saw it spring into the tree.

Every man there stood still and watched the gorilla in amazement. The tree was one place into which they could not follow it.

"Form a cordon!" roared Sheriff Brewster after a minute or two, and very soon men were all round the tree.

The watching men saw O'Neil swinging himself from branch to branch. In that great tree he was in his native element. The weight of Stark tucked under one arm was nothing to him. He still had his two feet and one powerful hand for climbing.

Up and up he went, whilst the onlookers held their breath. Some raised rifles, but a warning frown from the sheriff checked them.

"If you shoot the gorilla the man will fall," he pointed out. "Wait a while. We might be able to smoke him out after he's settled down. If once we can get him to set the man down—we'll riddle the brute with bullets."

So they waited, and the Six-Gun Gorilla continued his climb until he was on a great branch nearly a hundred feet above the ground.

A little out of breath because of the exertion, O'Neil gripped the tree-trunk with one hand and looked down at the men who were hunting him.

He scarcely heeded them. He was thinking of his beloved master, and of the vengeance he had planned to take for his cruel death.

The men below saw him take his prisoner in both hands. He balanced himself on the branch by his feet alone, gripping with his flexible toes.

He raised his arms and held Pete Stark aloft. The man shrieked with fear. He knew what was about to happen.

The men below were not so sure. Some of them caught their breath and muttered—

"He's going to throw him down!"

Then suddenly O'Neil uttered the most terrifying roar ever heard in that part of Colorado, and tossed his victim high out above the heads of the men below.

Pete Stark turned over twice in the air, then landed on his head on a rock. His skull was crushed, and his neck was instantly broken. He lay still and silent, whilst the circle of men were too paralysed with horror to make any movement.

O'Neil clenched his fists and hammered on his chest, bellowing his joy at having carried out another part of his scheme of vengeance. He had accounted for three of the men who had murdered his master. That left only one to be caught and punished.

Sheriff Brewster was the first to recover his wits.

"Now's our chance!" he roared. "He can't do any more harm. Let him have a volley. All together——"

A dozen rifles and twice as many revolvers were raised. Up there O'Neil made an easy target amongst the branches, but as soon as they pointed their guns at him he realised what was going to happen, and swung round behind the tree-trunk.

The men followed him round. Two of them fired. Chips of bark flew from the branch on which he stood, and then, without warning, O'Neil came dropping down out of the tree.

He had deliberately jumped out into space. It looked as though he was trying to commit suicide. Those Westerners who did not know the ways of gorillas when desperate, held their fire.

That was their mistake. O'Neil had no intention of committing suicide. His wild leap was merely a quick way of getting down.

Twenty feet from the ground he caught a projecting branch with both hands, and it bent like a bow under his six hundred pound weight.

A fraction of a second later, having broken his fall, he dropped among the men and scattered them like ninepins.

Not one of them had time to get off a single shot before the gorilla had bounded over their heads and gained the shelter of the bush.

O'Neil had outwitted more than three dozen men! He had carried out an execution in full view of an officer of the law and his posse. He had shown them something they would never forget.

Far into the bush he fled, glad to get away from the babble of voices and the crack of the guns. When he was a good distance away he took the first possible opportunity of reloading his revolver, a clumsy business with his thick fingers, but one he knew how to carry out effectively.

Owing to the fact that he had brought a full bandolier of cartridges with him, he was not yet running short of ammunition. He still had plenty of ammunition left, and if men shot at him he intended shooting back at them.

Before his reloading was complete, he heard crashing sounds and noises in the forest. The sheriff and his men were trailing him. They were picking out the tracks which his feet left on the ground. They were still determined to kill him.

O'Neil bared his teeth angrily. Why did they not leave him alone? He had done them no harm, nor did he wish to do so. All he wanted to do was to get the one remaining killer of his master.

It angered him greatly to think that these miners were hounding him from place to place. He decided to put a stop to that.

With his revolver tucked securely in its holster, he leapt into a low tree and hid behind the foliage. There he drew his gun and gripped it in his hairy right hand—and waited.

The hunters drew nearer and nearer. Sheriff Brewster was the leader. He was well to the fore, sometimes bent almost double when it was difficult to see the tracks on the ground.

Not far behind him came nine or ten other men. The rest had returned to their homes. The sheriff had called for volunteers to help him hunt down and destroy the Six-Gun Gorilla.

The gorilla took careful aim and fired. Crack! If the bullet had gone where O'Neil had intended it would have crashed through the sheriff's skull, but O'Neil had the bad habit of jerking the trigger and so pulling to the left of the target.

The bullet clipped the sheriff's ear, and caused him to drop quicker than he had ever dropped in his life.

Crack-crack-crack! O'Neil was now firing at the crowd of men behind the sheriff.

They scattered. The sight of a hairy hand brandishing a revolver, protruding from the branches of a tree had been too much for them. They turned and bolted.

Sheriff Brewster wisely crawled away and joined the others. He realised that to hunt down O'Neil very special precautions would have to be taken. It would not be like an ordinary man-hunt.

So O'Neil was left in undisputed possession of that part of the woods, and the sheriff and his posse set about picking up the tracks of Tutt Strawhan.

O'Neil's Strange Hold-Up

THE Six-Gun Gorilla remained in hiding until he was quite certain that the coast was clear. Two things were uppermost in his mind, the longing to settle Tutt Strawhan and the desire to fill his stomach. Hunger was a stronger urge than any other at the moment, and he looked around for something to eat.

To his disgust there was nothing that suited him. It was not the season of the year when berries abounded in the woods, and there were no palm shoots, young bamboos, or wild fruit such as the African jungle provided. Nature's larder was bare.

O'Neil was a strict vegetarian, but he needed large quantities of food at set intervals. Until he had satisfied this appetite he would be interested in nothing else.

Hunger drove him to cover a good stretch of country before mid-day. He came to an abandoned shack and peered inside. The door was locked, but O'Neil's strength was the key to most locks. He forced the door open with his great fingers and passed inside.

It was a disappointment. There was nothing in the way of food. In his fury, O'Neil made matchwood of the furniture, then left the place.

On and on travelled the gorilla. It must have been early afternoon when an unusual sound caused him to stop and listen carefully. The sound of jingling harness and rumbling wheels came to his ears.

The Six-Gun Gorilla crept forward and peered through the bushes at the side of the trail. A stage-coach was coming down the trail, with several people on top of it. There

TALL *Your height increased* in 12 days or No cost. New discovery adds 2-5 ins. *I gained 4 ins.* Guaranteed safe. Full Course, 5/-. Details:—**P. M. MORLEY, 17 Cheapside, London, E.C.2.**

BIRDS' Eggs.—Send for our free catalogue of British birds' eggs. Cottrell, 9 Victoria Avenue, Chard, Somerset.

TO STAMP COLLECTORS

Closely-set Advertisements will be inserted in WIZARD under above heading at the prepaid rate of 3d per word per insertion. Spaced Advertisements 25/- per inch per insertion.

STAMPS.—300 different, including Airmail, beautiful uncommon sets, pictorials, Colonials. You'll be delighted. Price 6d. White, Stamps, Lye, Stourbridge.

508 STAMPS free! Mozambique, Bulgaria, Roumania, Greece. Brazil, etc. 2d postage. Request approvals. E. Eastick, 22 Bankside Road, Bournemouth.

85 DIFFERENT free, including 25 British Colonials, Selangor, 50 different stamps, Airmail, Philippines, Trinidad, Anzac, St Pierre and Miquelon. Also scarce Horseman stamps. Enclose 2d postage and request 50% discount approvals. Robinson Bros. (D), Moreton, Wirral.

12/6 FREE. 58 stamps catalcguing 12/6, including 12 K.G. VI., Jubilees, Coronations, Abyssinia, Congo, Manchukuo, to approval applicants sending 2d. Cockrill, 13 Montrell Rd., London, S.W.2.

FREE! 5 REIGN AND COMMEMORATIVE BRITISH COLONIAL PACKET.—25 different, including Q. Victoria, K. Edward VII., K. George V., K. Edward VIII., K. George VI., Jubilee and Coronation. Ask approvals. Enclose postage. Also free exchange for your duplicates. Dealers supplied. **ASTLEY & CO. (H.S), Newbolds, Wolverhampton.**

FIVE Manchukuo and five Latvia free! Send postage. Request approvals. Stockton, Bridgwater, Westcliff-on-Sea.

999 STAMPS free. Request approvals; 2d postage. Roberts, 207, Roman Road, East Ham, London, E.6.

50 DIFFERENT free. Request genuine approvals. Generous discount. Belcher, Belmont Rd., Stroud.

CHEAP approvals, ¼d upwards. Philatelist, 29 Stanley Road, Earlsdon, Coventry.

APPROVALS from ¼d; discount, gifts. Philatelist, 29 Stanley Road, Coventry.

TRIANGULAR STAMPS
37 Different Stamps Including
2 Triangulars FREE!
Includes British Colonials, Map and Pictorials, Old K.G., U.S.A., Canadians, Philippines. To the first 500 applicants we include a large Airmail Triangle and a Costa Rica Philatelic Exhibition Triangle, also a large diamond-shaped stamp. Just send 2d postage, requesting approvals.
LISBURN & TOWNSEND (W), LIVERPOOL, 3.

were six horses in the team, and they were all going at a good speed.

O'Neil licked his lips. Here were men, and men often had good things to eat. He remembered certain tins of canned fruit which he had found in a store. He wondered if there could be such things on this coach.

How to stop it was the next question. Even he realised that six horses were a tough proposition. If he leapt on top of one he would probably get kicked by the others.

Then he remembered that men were afraid of guns. He knew what had happened to his master. Guns had been used on that occasion. Now was a chance for O'Neil to apply the lessons he had learned.

So once again he drew the six-gun, and leaned forward through the bushes. The range was as yet too great, but O'Neil did not know that. All he knew was that if he pointed the gun and pulled trigger something very satisfying usually happened.

Bang! He had fired at the coach, and the flash of his gun was seen, the whistle of the bullet distinctly heard.

It so happened that this spot had a bad reputation for hold-ups. Only a week or two before there had been a coach held up at this same place, and the driver and one of the passengers had been killed in the fight that had followed.

The present driver at once concluded that this was the same gang at work again, and decided that he would take no risks with his own life.

"Whoa-a!" he cried, and hauled on the reins with all his might.

The horses had been going at a good pace. By the time they stopped they were opposite the point where the Six-Gun Gorilla was hidden.

O'Neil was pleased with the result of his experiment. He fired another shot just to make sure of things.

It knocked the driver's hat from his head, and with a howl of fear the man raised his arms over his head.

"All right, I've drawn up! Don't shoot!" he gasped.

The passengers behind him were seized with the same fear. One and all raised their arms in the air.

O'Neil blinked. This was a funny way to behave. He had not seen men do this before. For a moment he was suspicious that there was some trick about it, but when they did not stir he grew more confident.

He started to emerge. The bushes parted, and the trembling occupants of the coach held their breath. They wondered what kind of man the bandit was. They hoped that he would be content with their money, and not take their lives as well.

Then simultaneous gasps of horror escaped them. No man stepped forth, but a monstrous gorilla brandishing a gun, a bandolier slung over one massive shoulder.

O'Neil went straight towards them on his hind-legs, and their mouths dried with fear. The driver fainted and fell from the box to the road.

None of the coach passengers stirred. Gorilla the bandit might be, but he had a gun which he knew how to use. When he pointed it at them they winced.

The Six-Gun Gorilla bared his fangs and growled. He did not know where to begin. He could smell no food, though there were one or two crates stowed on top of the coach which looked interesting.

The horses were trembling and sweating with fear. They would have bolted if the guard had not held them in.

Twice O'Neil circled the coach, then he caught hold of one of the doors and wrenched it open. He did not trouble to turn the knob. He did not know that there was a catch on the door. From his point of view it did not matter very much, for it came away from its hinges without any trouble.

He stuck his gun and his head inside the coach and sniffed. The passengers cringed back in dismay, thinking that their last moments had come.

REGIMENTAL MASCOTS

Muriel of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers!

Of all the strange mascots in the British Army, perhaps Muriel was the strangest. Muriel was a pig.

She was found in the jungle at Sialkot, India, when a young squeaker. She was brought up on an ordinary baby's milk bottle and soon grew to an enormous size. Without any tuition she soon began to take her place at the head of the regiment and would dodge in and out of the band.

Whatever the soldiers had to do, Muriel did it, too—she even attended church parade.

One thing she really looked forward to was the once-a-week cross-country run of the regiment. Then Muriel would line up with the boys. And as soon as the pistol went she was off with the best of them. Though she never broke the tapes first, Muriel always completed the course and usually got fourth or fifth place.

When the regiment went out on the field, training, Muriel led the way and took part in the exercises.

When the regiment moved from one station to another in India, Muriel moved with them in a specially-built cage which was labelled "Package No. 4," because livestock was barred. But when the regiment was ordered to Iraq, the troopship authorities refused to allow her to embark, and she had to be left behind in India.

Learn more about the regiments by saving up the thrilling "Battles for the Flag" Cards. No. 9 is given FREE in "The Wizard" next week. It is—THE BUFFS (The East Kent Regiment).

The Fight for the Colours at Albuera.

O'Neil sniffed again. Unless he was very much mistaken, he could smell something to eat. In a corner of the coach was a carefully packed crate. One hairy hand came out and gripped it, jerked it into the road with a mighty crash, and it burst open.

Out rolled oranges, the first O'Neil had seen for many a day. This crateful was a special consignment brought at enormous expense from the East for a gold-miner millionaire.

O'Neil gave a roar of triumph. The amazed passengers saw the Six-Gun Gorilla lower his gun and snatch up two oranges at a time. He crushed them into his mouth, peel and all, and squeezed them between his powerful jaws.

Orange after orange he snatched from the crate in the same way, and seated himself beside the trail to enjoy this unexpected feast.

Then the guard realised that they were safe. This particular bandit had no further use for them or their money. All the gorilla had wanted was food.

Cautiously the man took off the brakes and shook the reins. The team of horses trotted forward, broke into a canter, and raced away down the trail.

O'Neil raised his head and blinked after them. He raised no objection to them going. They had provided him with the best meal he had had for a while, and he was grateful to them. There and then he decided that it might be worth while holding up every coach he saw.

So, for the next half-hour he squatted there eating, finally turning the box upside down to get out the last orange. At last filled and satisfied, he rolled down under the nearby bushes and went to sleep.

Meanwhile, the coach with its terrified passengers and almost hysterical driver, had arrived in the next settlement, and told their amazing story of a monster with a gun which had robbed them of a crate of oranges.

At first they were not believed, but just about that same time a messenger came from Sheriff Brewster, asking all and sundry to keep an eye open for a fierce gorilla, and people began to realise that the story was true.

Once again a posse was formed to hunt down the Six-Gun Gorilla, and the searchers rode out cautiously along the road to the spot where the hold-up had occurred.

O'Neil was still there, sleeping off his big meal. The clatter of the horses awakened him, and he raised his ugly head to stare at the approaching group of horsemen.

More men! They had guns!

He did not wait to face them, but dived back into the woods and travelled through these parallel with the trail for many a mile. He was trying to get on the track of Tutt Strawhan. For the moment he had lost it, but sooner or later he knew that he would come up with it again, and finish the job which he had already threequarters accomplished.

He kept close to the trail, for he realised that coaches travelled along this, and since his fortunate find of the oranges he was very interested in stage-coaches. He meant to stop every one that he saw!

He was not the only one with that idea in view that late afternoon.

In the mining camp to which he had fled once he had escaped from the gorilla, Tutt Strawhan had found new clothes, guns, ammunition, food, but no cash.

He had got away on horseback before the miners had returned to discover their losses. He rode hard for most of the day, taking an altogether different route to that of O'Neil.

He knew that Pete Stark would be dead by this time, but that did not worry him. He believed that he had finally shaken the Six-Gun Gorilla off his trail. All he now needed was some cash in order to make his getaway a certainty. In some other State he might be able to forget the nightmare of the past six weeks..

So, towards late afternoon, when he came to a trail where wheel-marks told him coaches sometimes passed, the idea of staging a hold-up suddenly struck him.

There were gold-mines to the west, and there was a fair-sized settlement at the rail-head some thirty miles to the east. He did not see why he could not intercept a consignment of gold-dust. He was well-armed, and with guns in his hands he was a different person to the man who had cowered before the Six-Gun Gorilla.

So he examined the tracks and tried to guess when the coaches usually passed. He came to the conclusion that one usually passed that way before sunset..

Hitching his horse to a convenient tree, he proceeded to wait patiently for the coming of the coach. As he waited, he munched some of the food he had brought with him from the mining camp.

Time passed, and finally, in the distance, he heard the tell-tale rumble of wheels.

His lips parted in an evil smile. Before long his victims would be within revolver range, and Tutt Strawhan had never been a man to to show mercy at such a time. He preferred to shoot and be certain.

What he did not know was that he had a rival waiting further down the trail, a rival hold-up bandit who was listening to the coming of this same coach.

O'Neil had decided to look for more oranges. He, too, had hidden himself behind some bushes with a gun in his fist!

What will happen when Tutt Strawhan holds up the coach? Don't miss next week's thrilling instalment, and make sure of getting No. 9 of the FREE "Battles For The Flag" Cards by ordering your "Wizard" now!

What happens when the Six-Gun Gorilla and a gunman both hold up the same coach!
DON'T MISS THE THRILLS BELOW!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Gold Coach Hold-Up

THE stage-coach was bowling along smoothly over a comparatively level trail. There were not many passengers aboard, but, judging by the effort the horses were putting out, there was something inside which weighed even more than passengers.

A big consignment of gold-dust was aboard, from the new mines which had been opened in the nearby hills. The coach was heading for the rail-head, about thirty miles away. Beside the driver sat the watchful guard, a shot-gun across his knees, a revolver in each of his low-slung holsters.

Sunset was not far off, and over the prairie there spread the hush which precedes nightfall.

Behind a clump of bushes crouched an evil-looking ruffian with two revolvers. His eyes were on the oncoming coach, his fingers on the triggers. He was Tutt Strawhan, the notorious killer, and one-time leader of the most feared gang of bad-men in that part of the West.

Now, however, his gang was no more, he was on his own, and the cause of this break-up was a gorilla!

Some months before this, Strawhan had heard about old Bart Masters, who had worked a little gold-mine of his own in the Boulder Hills of Colorado. Masters had worked that mine for seven years, aided by a gorilla which he had purchased from a sailor named O'Neil.

O'Neil was the name which Masters had given the huge brute, and O'Neil had become his constant companion. The miner had taught the great beast to be useful in many different ways. It could dig, bring in firewood, or haul up buckets of ore from the mine-shaft, and what was more, and of great importance, it had been taught to fire and load a revolver.

One night Masters had decided to take all the gold he possessed, about ten thousand pounds' worth, and return to civilisation. Before he could leave, however, the Strawhan gang had arrived, and had killed the miner, wounded the chained gorilla, and made off with the gold.

O'Neil had only been stunned, however, and when he had recovered and found that his master was dead, he had been heart-broken. He had buckled on his late master's six-shooter and cartridge bandolier, and had set out on the trail of the murderers.

The trail had led for a hundred miles and more. O'Neil had hounded the guilty men from place to place, and had forced them to abandon the gold. He had already killed three of them, and had continued after Tutt Strawhan so closely that the one-time leader of the bandits had had to make for a new district.

At the moment Tutt Strawhan believed that the gorilla had lost touch with him. All Strawhan wanted was some money with which to get across the Border to safety. He had decided to hold up this coach which was coming from the mines and take all the gold-dust he wanted.

Nearer came the coach. The hidden gunman's eyes gleamed more intensely.

Strawhan drew a bead on the luckless guard who sat beside the driver, and when the coach was but thirty paces away, he pressed the trigger of his right-hand weapon.

The sound of the shot shattered the silence. The guard's gun dropped from his fingers, and he rolled from the coach—dead!

Hardly had the echo of the first report ceased ringing when a bullet caught the leading horse in the head, killing it instantaneously. The coach came to a standstill, and the terrified driver raised his arms.

"Don't shoot!" he pleaded.

Tutt Strawhan came slowly from the undergrowth, a gun in either fist. He advanced towards the coach menacingly.

"If anyone moves—he'll get a bullet in him," he snarled. "Where's the gold?"

Fifty yards down the trail there was a movement behind some more bushes. A hideous face appeared, and stared in the direction of the hold-up. The face was the face of O'Neil, the Six-Gun Gorilla, and his gun was in his fist!

He, too, had been waiting for that coach. Since O'Neil had lost touch with Tutt Strawhan he had been roaming the country-side, and on one occasion he had held up a stage-coach in which there had been a crate of oranges.

O'Neil had harmed none of the occupants, but he had taken the oranges and enjoyed them so much that he now believed that every coach carried oranges. So when he had heard this vehicle approaching down the trail he had decided to stage another hold-up, little knowing that Tutt Strawhan intended doing the same.

The wind was blowing in the wrong direction for Strawhan's scent to be carried to the gorilla, and so O'Neil had no idea that his enemy was so near him, or there would have been a very different story to tell.

The first warning he had of the presence of anyone else near him was those shots, and he peered out to see who was spoiling his chance of a first-class meal.

The coach and the plunging horses had come to rest, and blocked his view of the man who had caused the stoppage.

The Six-Gun Gorilla showed his yellow fangs in a soundless snarl. Who had dared to interfere with his plans? Was someone trying to get the oranges before him?

He lumbered through the bushes parallel with the trail. The six-gun was in his hairy fist, a partially-filled bandolier over one shoulder. He was immense in size, being well over six feet in height, and enormously broad.

He was mad with fury. He had rarely been so angry since his master had died.

He drew level with the stage-coach on the opposite side of it from Strawhan just as the hold-up bandit thundered—

"Everyone get out and stand on this side of the road!"

The three passengers got out, leaving the door of the coach swinging open. The trembling driver had indicated that there were two crates of gold-dust inside.

He saw nothing for it but to hand over the gold to the scoundrel with the gun. Only in that way would the lives of himself and his passengers be saved.

Tutt Strawhan kept one gun trained on the cowering men, and made for the doorway of the coach to make sure that the crates were actually there.

He even set one foot on the step, and stuck his face inside—just as another face came through the opposite window!

A hairy, flat-nosed, fierce-eyed, monstrous face, it was the face of the gorilla! O'Neil was having a look to see what all the excitement was about, and just for a moment he and Strawhan were face to face, almost within reach of each other.

Tutt Strawhan was so terrified that he forgot to raise his gun and fire. The colour drained from his cheeks, and he reeled backwards with a choking sob.

The Six-Gun Gorilla gave one terrible roar, and tried to get at his enemy by diving through the open window. That was impossible, however. The window was not nearly big enough. O'Neil stuck for an instant then drew back and snatched at the edge of the door with a huge, hairy paw.

The door came off its hinges when he gave a powerful wrench. The coach rocked, the horses reared again, and the terrified hold-up man raced down the trail towards the spot where he had left his horse tethered.

Tutt Strawhan no longer cared about the gold that lay in those crates in the coach. There was only one thing he wanted—to get away from the menace of the Six-Gun Gorilla. It seemed incredible to him that the gorilla should have turned up at this moment.

O'Neil dived through the suddenly opened doorway, across the coach, and out the other side. The men who had been lined up there promptly turned and fled for the cover of the trees.

O'Neil paid no attention to them. He was only interested in Tutt Strawhan. As the Six-Gun Gorilla rushed forward he saw the man he was after come out of the bushes, bending low over his horse. Away down the trail thundered the terrified hold-up man, and the Six-Gun Gorilla knew that he could never catch him on foot.

Just then the panic-stricken coach-horses tried to bolt, but they were hampered by the lifeless leading horse which Strawhan had shot.

O'Neil saw what was wrong. He jumped forward, caught hold of the traces which held the dead animal, and gave one terrific jerk. The traces broke, and the remaining three horses were free to bolt down the trail.

Away they went, the one door left on the coach swinging to and fro. As the coach started its mad journey the Six-Gun Gorilla leapt on top of it, and clung on.

He had realised that the coach was going in the same direction as the man he wanted. It would enable him to keep Tutt Strawhan in sight.

So there he crouched on the top of the coach, snarling and growling, watching the frantic

Even on horseback Tutt Strawhan could not escape the vengeance of O'Neil. The Six-Gun Gorilla had captured a coach and was now using it to chase the runaway gunman!

efforts of the horses, who could smell him in the rear, and who were trying to escape from his presence.

Faster and faster the animals went, until there was a final mighty crash as a wheel struck a tree. The traces all snapped at once, the horses galloped madly on, and O'Neil was sent head over heels into the bushes at the side of the trail.

His revolver went off as he fell, but he did not relax his hold on it. The jarring impact on the ground knocked the breath from his body. He snarled and growled with fury as he picked himself up, but he was not hurt in any way. Only his temper had suffered.

The coach now lay on its side, but O'Neil righted it with one heave of his powerful arms. The two crates inside attracted his attention. They did not smell as if they contained oranges, but he was going to examine them nevertheless.

With his fingers he prised open the lids of one of them and peered inside. The yellow dust puzzled him. He grabbed a handful and put it in his mouth, only to spit it out a moment later in disgust, for it had no flavour.

The feel of it between his fingers told him it was the stuff for which his master had slaved for all those years at the mine. Again he snorted, and turned his fierce eyes towards the West. There went the killer of his master. He was going after him.

Two minutes later the late occupants of the coach who peered out from behind the shelter of the trees, watched a gorilla disappearing at full speed down the western trail.

They could hardly believe that they were still alive and unharmed.

The Mysterious Strangler

TUTT STRAWHAN kept looking back, beating and goading his horse until he was quite sure that he had outdistanced his terrible pursuer. Then he began to mutter fierce curses. Was this Six-Gun Gorilla going to haunt him all his life? Was it always going to hound him, always going to interfere with every piece of business he undertook?

This thought drove him to fury. His lips curled back from his teeth, and he snarled like a wild beast.

Over and over again he had told himself that the only thing to be done was to face the monster and kill it. Several times he had tried that, but without success.

Penniless, though well equipped with weapons and ammunition which he had recently stolen, Strawhan was in no fit condition to cross the Border and establish himself in new surroundings. He wanted to have some money with him when he went over the Border. How to get that was his next worry. The big chance with the gold-carrying coach had been ruined by O'Neil.

Strawhan crossed the next hills and rode through a region of canyons and defiles. He was trying to make up a plan for the future, and all the time he urged his horse on to make sure that the maddened gorilla did not overtake him. He knew very well that it could trail him by its powers of scent.

Meanwhile darkness had fallen. The hoofs of the horse beat hollowly on the hard ground as Strawhan entered one particularly gloomy-looking canyon, and suddenly a shot whistled past his head.

"Halt! Hands up!" came a snarled order.

Tutt Strawhan's first impulse was to crouch forward on his horse, dig in his heels, and dash straight on.

Then he changed his mind. There were at least six men in the party, and four of them were right in front of him. He thought he heard another one or two jumping down from the rocks behind him.

He saw that he was cornered, and raised his arms after checking his weary horse.

"What's the big idea?" he growled. "What do you want with me?"

"Whatever you've got!" was the curt reply from a hare-lipped ruffian who had his

hat pulled forward over his eyes.

Tutt Strawhan gave a mocking laugh.

"Well, pardners, you're sure welcome to all I've got," he said. "My guns are the only things I possess, an' that's the truth. Fact is, I'm in the same line as yourselves. I'm Tutt Strawhan."

"Not the Strawhan who shot the sheriff of Alder Creek?" muttered one of the hold-up gang, lowering his gun.

"The same! That's me," growled Strawhan. "I guess we ought to be friends. I've nothin' to hand over."

The hare-lipped man growled angrily.

"He's no more Tutt Strawhan than I am!" he snarled. "Strawhan has a gang with him. He wouldn't be ridin' alone like this. That guy's lying. He——"

Crack-crack! Tutt Strawhan had not been accounted one of the most dangerous men in the country for nothing. When he was up against men he was fearless. He had produced his gun as if from nowhere, and had drilled the hare-lipped leader in two places before any of the gang could stir.

Then, with a gun in either hand, he covered the rest of the toughs, ordering grimly—

"Don't raise them guns again. I want to talk to you. I'm Tutt Strawhan all right. Who was that I just shot?"

"Hare-lip Harry!" grunted one of the men nervously.

"Then he was a cheap piker, not worth knowing," growled Strawhan. "If you want a leader, I'm ready to show you guys how to get some big money. I've lost my gang. They got themselves shot up. I'm looking for some good men right now. What about it?"

The gang of toughs looked at each other. They had all heard of Tutt Strawhan, and the neat way in which he had disposed of their leader and turned the tables on them had impressed them greatly.

"Sure!" murmured one. "We're with you, Strawhan. Hare-Lip never did bring us much luck."

So it was settled, and once again Tutt Strawhan found himself at the head of six or seven men who were as desperate as himself. It was a great relief to him to know that he now had some men behind him, but one thing was certain. He was not going to scare them by telling them about the Six-Gun Gorilla. Evidently they had not heard of that episode in his life.

His new gang led him back amongst the trees to a secluded corner where they had a camp. They told him that they had heard his hoof-beats in the distance, and had come out to "welcome" him.

They gave him food and coffee. He boasted of his plans, but all the time he was straining his eyes into the distance, wondering how long it would be before the gorilla arrived.

At last he said as casually as he could—

"There's one thing I didn't tell you men. I've got a sheriff's posse after me. They shot up my gang when we tried to stop the coach from the mines. It was a put-up job. They fixed an ambush for us. I don't know whether they've struck my trail to here or not, but I want to take no risks. They've got a first-class tracker with 'em. He might find his way here."

"Don't you worry, Strawhan, no tracker could follow you over this hard ground," declared one of the gang.

"Don't be so sure," snapped Strawhan. "This guy is a wizard. I'd feel mighty upset if we had trouble the first night I arrived. The only thing to do to make sure we'll be safe is to set a man on either side of the entrance to the canyon, an' they can shoot down anyone who enters before daylight. That'll make certain we're not disturbed here. We don't want any accidents before we get going properly."

Two of the gang promptly volunteered to take up this job for the night, and with a couple of guns apiece they posted themselves on either side of the entrance to the canyon.

Utterly worn out by his recent attempts to escape the gorilla, the killer went off into a deep sleep which lasted for hours.

His men were getting breakfast ready when he wakened in the morning, feeling much fresher and full of confidence, ready to face most dangers.

"Any trouble in the night?" he asked casually.

"Nope, not that we know of," answered one of the gang. "Ted an' Jake haven't come in yet, but they did no shootin' after dark. They ought to be in to breakfast soon."

After a few minutes the coffee was ready, and there was still no sign of the two sentries. One of the men went to the top of the slope and bellowed their names.

To their surprise there was no response.

"It ain't like them to miss their grub," muttered one of the gang. "Surely they ain't gone to sleep on their job!"

Tutt Strawhan and two of the men went down the canyon to see what was wrong. Strawhan for some reason felt nervous. His hand was continually on his gun, though there was no sign of anything being wrong.

"Hi, Jake! Hi, Ted, what's the matter with you?" shouted one man. "Don't you want any grub this morning?"

The words were echoed by the cliffs on either side, but there was no response from the men concerned.

Again Tutt Strawhan shivered, and he gripped his gun.

"Where did you post Jake?" he asked.

The two men with Strawhan pointed behind a certain boulder near the mouth of the canyon, and all three went round there to see if their comrade had left any clue to his whereabouts.

Tutt Strawhan was to the forefront, and he gave a sudden strangled cry, pointing with a shaking finger at the ground.

The man called Jake lay there. He lay on his chest behind the rock, and the position of his inert body told his horrified comrades that he was dead. Livid marks on his neck showed that some terrible pair of hands had gripped the unfortunate sentry and had strangled him.

Gurgles of horror came from the other men as they stooped beside their dead comrade. One of them pointed out the livid bruises on his neck, where the great fingers had gripped and twisted.

"What—who could have done it?" muttered one tough. "Jake was a strong man, an' no ordinary person could have done this. It—it's uncanny!"

Tutt Strawhan swallowed hard. He could have told them that there was only one being in Colorado that could have done this thing—the Six-Gun Gorilla!

Strawhan could picture how the great beast had scented the presence of the gunman, and how instinct had warned it that the man was dangerous. O'Neil had probably climbed up the sheer cliff beyond and dropped down on the man from above. Jake had been killed before he could even pull trigger.

It was ghastly, terrifying, almost paralysing. Tutt Strawhan's mouth dried with fear. What had happened to the gorilla after it had killed Jake?

"And Ted?" muttered someone else. "He was behind those bushes over on the other side there. Hey, Ted!"

They found Ted a few minutes later. He lay on his back, and his head lolled to one side. His neck was broken.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had silenced both the sentries in the night. Why had it not followed up its advantage by attacking the sleepers in the camp? Where was it now? Had it gone into hiding somewhere? These questions hammered in Strawhan's brain while the other men muttered among themselves.

The gang leader kept a tight hold on himself and tried to remain cool. It was very difficult. Every few minutes he found himself staring over his own shoulder in fear. He was expecting the Six-Gun Gorilla to leap on him at any minute.

The Attack on the Mine

TERROR came to the gang. They remained in that gorge no longer than was necessary to pack up their kit and mount their horses. Tutt Strawhan spent those last minutes there with his back to a rock and his guns in his hand. Even then he was afraid that O'Neil might drop upon him from the top of the boulder.

Why did the gorilla not show itself? It was unlike O'Neil to wait his time. Usually he went at things in a bull-headed manner, tearing down every obstacle. What was holding him back now? Was he playing with Tutt Strawhan as a cat plays with a mouse? Sweat broke out on the gunman's face as he thought of this possibility.

The rest of the gang licked their lips and watched their leader's face. They were ready to admit that they were terrified, but they were rather disappointed in him. They had always heard that Strawhan was fearless, but now he seemed filled with a deadly terror. They wondered why.

Before long they were clattering up the gorge, heading further West, and even then Strawhan kept an eye on the cliffs on either side.

They had reached the end of the canyon, and were about to descend the slope beyond, when a revolver sounded on their right. Crack! The bullet whistled between two of the men, making them crouch low and urge their horses to a gallop.

There was no other shot. That single report had seemed to come from nowhere, and only one member of the party could have explained it. Tutt Strawhan fancied that he had seen a hairy arm come for one moment out of some bushes, and then disappear immediately the shot had been fired. The Six-Gun Gorilla had not followed up his shot.

Why? What did this change of tactics mean? Was the gorilla hatching some plot by which it hoped to trap Tutt Strawhan? Once again the gang leader shuddered at the thought.

The fleeing toughs rode down that long slope at break-neck speed, then pulled up at the bottom. One of the gang, a man named Gorman, forced a laugh.

"Well, if that was a sheriff's posse that was after you, Strawhan, we've sure shaken it off!" he growled. "There's nary a person on the slope."

"It wasn't no posse that did Jake an' Ted in," growled another of the men. "Reckon there's more than that behind us."

The other two men were watching Tutt Strawhan closely. He licked his lips and forced his brain to act quickly. He could see that the men were getting suspicious. He had to invent something.

"Seems to me I once heard of a mad hermit who lives in these parts," he muttered. "Maybe he had a spite against us. If I thought it was worth while I'd go back an' search those hills for him, but I'm thinking of you others. You want to get busy raising some cash. There's a small mine run by half a dozen miners over in the next valley. Supposed to be pretty rich it is. I vote we head that way an' clean 'em out."

The idea met with their approval. In thinking of the gold-dust which they hoped would be theirs before nightfall, they managed to forget the horror of the past hour, and the deaths of their two comrades.

But Tutt Strawhan could not forget. He knew that all the gold-dust in the world would not make him forget the peril which hung over him.

O'Neil was still on his trail! That was as certain as the rising of the sun in the morning. The gorilla was relentless, and though it was sometimes slow in picking up a new trail, it never failed to do so.

That was why Strawhan wanted staunch

(Continued on page 21.)

"Drink, gentlemen, drink to what will be one of the finest sporting properties in the country within five years," he cried, holding aloft a huge tankard of wine.

"Hard luck on the crofters, but good luck for your friends, Colonel," said the captain.

"Crofters — bah!" cried the Colonel, snapping his fingers. "They're little better than wild beasts."

"I didn't like the look that big fellow gave you after the flogging," said the captain after a bit. "He looked the kind of man who might come back from the grave to get you."

"He doesn't need to come from so far," said a low voice from the doorway.

The Red MacGregor closed the door from behind him, and stood facing the astounded company.

Crash! With a yell of fury, mingled with fear, the Black Colonel rose from his seat and hurled his heavy tankard. The Red MacGregor ducked, the tankard missed, but the fiery liquid spattered in his eyes. For a moment he was half-blinded.

The Black Colonel hurled himself across the floor, a wicked dirk raised aloft in his right hand. Before the Red MacGregor could swing Long Angus, the Colonel's left hand was at his throat.

The Redcoat officers stared in silence, all thinking the outlaw's end was near. But they did not know the Red MacGregor. As the Black Colonel's right hand descended, a hand like steel shot up and clutched his wrist. The dagger's stroke was stayed. The outlaw's other hand grasped the Black Colonel's left wrist.

And then there was a gasp of amazement from the Redcoats. The Black Colonel was a powerful man, and he exerted every muscle in his body. But slowly his rigid arms were pushed back—and back—until his arms were almost dislocated from their sockets.

"Murderer of women and children—now you will pay for all the sorrow you have brought to the land." The Red MacGregor's voice was low and deadly.

As he spoke, he began to exert all his giant strength. The Black Colonel screamed. The officers started forward to his help. But too late. The Red MacGregor swung the scoundrel off his feet. With one mighty heave he hurled him through the air.

The Redcoats could do nothing but watch in awe. The Colonel's body hurtled straight for the big window at the far end of the room. Parchment covered it instead of glass. The Black Colonel went through the parchment as clean as a whistle. Faint and far away his scream sounded, showing what a distance he dropped in as many seconds.

"Sit still," said the outlaw to the open-mouthed dragoons. "You have been spending a social evening. You are quite unarmed, I perceive. I have no wish for further bloodshed. Let me go my way in peace."

He backed to the door, darted through, slammed it shut, and turned the key.

Immediately the place was in an uproar. The dumbfounded Redcoats thundered at the door, rousing the servants. But too late. The Red MacGregor was gone.

Early next morning the Red MacGregor sat on a ledge high up on the cliffs where no one but a wild goat would have thought of venturing. He saw the Redcoats making a search of the island for him, and saw a Government ship, which was to take away the Redcoats, putting into the harbour.

The captain of the ship was evidently in a hurry. The Red MacGregor saw him having a heated argument with the leader of the Redcoats. Then the Redcoats were recalled from their searching and began to embark, taking their equipment with them. Shortly after midday the ship sailed.

Late in the evening the slave ship came in sight once more. As she anchored in the harbour the Red MacGregor swam out and scrambled on board.

"Get back to your homes, men of Skye," he cried to the island folk. "The Redcoats have gone, and the Black Colonel is dead."

To the captain of the ship, who was a prisoner on deck, he said—"Take your ship and your men away. They are not needed here now. When you make your report, I trust you, as an honourable man, to say that the Red MacGregor alone was responsible for the mutiny, and that no vengeance can be justly taken on the innocent islesfolk."

"Ay, that will be but common honesty," said the skipper, who looked a fair-minded man. A twinkle came into his shrewd eyes. "Ye may be an outlaw and a MacGregor," he cried, "but, bust my timbers, ye're a man, and if ye'll shake hands with a poor seaman ——"

"You're a man with good judgment," chuckled the Red MacGregor, and took the seaman's hand in his great paw.

"Easy does it. Easy there—belay. The bones are crackin'," protested the skipper.

The Red MacGregor laughed and slapped him on the back.

There is another story of the three outlaws next week. Read how the Red MacGregor faces capture and death—because Laughing John was hungry.

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18.)

comrades with him, and why he was willing to offer them the bait of gold-dust to remain with him.

All that morning the gang rode hard, and it was early afternoon when at last they saw the dump of earth and rock which had been turned out from the Conifer Mine.

This mine was set in a hollow between three hills. It was a remote spot, with a waterfall supplying ample water for washing ore. As a matter of fact Strawhan had been right when he had said that it was rich, and there was no doubt that when the country was more developed, more would be heard of the Conifer Mine.

At the moment it supported six or seven hard-working miners who had formed a little syndicate and bought one stamping-machine.

From the trees at the top of the hills, the three ruffians cast greedy eyes on the collection of shacks below. They could see only two men moving about, and guessed that the other miners were below working. There was a good-sized shaft at one end of the property, with an extra large windlass, geared for winding.

"Now's our chance!" whispered Tutt Strawhan. "We'll deal with those two first, then we'll have the others at our mercy."

The ruffians left their horses under the trees, and crept down the slope. They kept behind their leader, and the two unsuspecting miners were stooping over some newly-raised ore when they felt two guns prodding them in the back.

"Up with 'em!" came the voice of Tutt Strawhan. "Step back from there."

Bewildered, trapped by three armed men, the luckless miners stepped back, and were at once seized. Their weapons were taken from them, and their arms pinioned behind their backs

The fact that the miners had been captured would have satisfied most men, but not Tutt Strawhan.

"Take 'em over there to the corner an' finish 'em!" he muttered.

A few moments later a crackle of shots told that his orders had been carried out. The men down in the mine still knew nothing of what was happening.

About two minutes later there came a shout from the bottom of the mine—

"Haul away, Eb!"

Tutt Strawhan nodded to one of his men, who worked the windlass vigorously. A great bucket of ore came to the surface, was emptied, and duly returned empty.

In this way the men below were kept in ignorance of any trouble above. It gave the Strawhan gang time to search the mine and discover the stock of gold-dust which had recently been raised.

They were rather disappointed with what they found. There was much less than they had expected, not enough to repay them for their trouble.

Tutt Strawhan growled with fury.

"Maybe they keep their dust down below in the mine," he said. "I've heard of that being done before. Maybe they've got a store down there. We'll have to see."

It was obviously impossible to descend the shaft whilst the men were there. It would be much too dangerous. Strawhan decided that it would be far better to wait until the miners unsuspectingly returned to the surface, and then deal with them.

"We'll shoot all except one, an' keep him to make him tell us where the dust is kept," snarled the gang leader. "Meanwhile keep that windlass going. They mustn't know anything's wrong."

So all the afternoon the windlass creaked, and the ore was emptied into a pile. Tutt Strawhan did not help with this. He spent most of his time in the stone building, with the door closed, peering from the window.

Whenever any of his new friends came into the shack he seemed to be searching under the floor-boards for gold, but actually he was watching the surrounding slopes, wondering if the Six-Gun Gorilla had yet tracked him down.

At last, just about four o'clock in the afternoon, he saw it!

It was outlined against the skyline on the eastern side of the hollow. Just for a moment it stood there, balancing itself with one hand on a tree, the six-gun and the bandolier clearly visible.

Its head was turned towards the mine, and Tutt Strawhan shivered. It knew that he was there! It was coming down to seek him, and if he remained where he was he would be trapped!

Only for a moment did the gorilla show itself, then it dodged down amongst the bushes and vanished.

Tutt Strawhan gave a choking gurgle. Just then one of his gang came in at the door and said—

"They won't be long coming up now. One of 'em shouted that they'd be knocking off in half an hour. Better come an' get ready for 'em, Tutt."

"No!" the gang leader croaked. "We've got to get out of here at once, an' by that side of the hollow. I've just seen the—the sheriff an' his posse up there on the ridge. I believe they're creeping down the slope. Let's get our hosses an' bolt for it."

The man frowned.

"Seems to me we made a mistake when we took you on as our leader, Strawhan. You've lost your nerve. Why shouldn't we stop here an' face them? With these buildings to cover us we'd soon settle them. We'll give you a hand to wipe them out, then deal with the miners afterwards. Remember the gold-dust."

Strawhan clenched his fists.

"I say we've got to clear out!" he rasped. "We've got to go—got to! Do you hear me?"

He clutched at the other's arm, and the man thrust him away.

"Better go by yourself, Strawhan," he growled. "We're not leaving until we lay hands on that dust. You go if you want to, but you don't get no share of the gold."

Tutt Strawhan nearly choked with terror. Through the window he could see the bushed slope, and could imagine a huge, slinking shape gliding nearer and nearer.

His impulse was to get his horse and ride away at once, yet that would mean going alone. It would mean that he would lose his new friends.

He had a terrible alternative, either to flee alone or stay here at the mine and face O'Neil!

There are surprises for you in next week's thrilling instalment of this great story. Don't miss it, and make sure your "Wizard" contains No. 10 of the great FREE "Battles For the Flag" Cards!

How a killer had a hairsbreadth escape from death—BECAUSE OF A BOTTLE OF HAIR OIL!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Tutt Strawhan Surrenders

THE Conifer Mine was a lonely one, one of the loneliest in Colorado. Set in a hollow between high hills, it was remote from the world, a fit setting for the grim drama which was being played out there.

Two dead bodies lay in one of the sheds, the bodies of the two miners who had been working on the surface when a gang of desperate gunmen had descended on the place in search of gold.

The rest of the group of miners who owned the mine were still down in the workings, knowing nothing of the fate of their comrades, or what was awaiting them up above.

For hours the windlass had been worked by the gunmen, who were only waiting for the miners to come to the surface in order to shoot all except one. That man was to be spared so that he could be questioned and forced to tell where the gold-dust was hidden.

Leader of this villainous gang was Tutt Strawhan, a killer with an evil reputation in the West. The men who were now working with him had only recently come under his leadership, and at the moment they were looking at him with contempt and wonder.

For just when they were about to see the results of their day's work, just as the miners were about to come up to the surface and fall into the trap, Tutt Strawhan was pleading with his comrades to leave and flee.

"I tell you we've got to run for it! There's not a moment to spare!" he croaked, as he crouched in the only stone-built cabin in the tiny settlement. "That sheriff's got a dozen men with him. We've got no chance!"

Sweat trickled down his face. His mouth quivered with terror. His face was ghastly to look upon. It was bewildering to these hardened gunmen that such a tough fellow as Tutt Strawhan could be scared because he had seen a sheriff's posse approaching.

That was what he had just told his comrades. He said he had seen the sheriff coming through the trees.

"Nix on that!" growled one of the group. "We're stopping here, sheriff or no sheriff! We can deal with him an' the miners as well. If you want to quit, Strawhan, get going!"

No man had ever spoken to Tutt Strawhan like that before without guns being drawn, but to-day he even ignored the insult.

Although his companions did not know it, Strawhan was in mortal terror of something more dangerous than any sheriff. He was in terror of something so horrible that he had not even dared tell his new partners of its existence. Even now he continued to lie to them.

Some months before this Tutt Strawhan had been at the height of his power, with a well-armed gang. He had heard of the Dragonfly Mine, a rich little gold mine owned and worked by an old miner named Bart Masters.

Masters had worked the mine for seven years, aided by a gorilla which he had purchased from a sailor.

O'Neil was the name Masters had given his pet, and O'Neil had become his constant companion. The miner had taught the great beast to be useful in many ways. It could dig, bring in firewood, or haul up buckets of ore from the mine shaft. What was most important, however, was the fact that he had taught it how to handle a revolver!

The night the Strawhan Gang had arrived at the mine Masters had collected all his gold, ten thousand pounds' worth, for transport to civilisation, for he intended to retire from work. The Strawhan Gang had killed him, had wounded the chained gorilla, and had made off with the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, however, and his sorrow and rage had been terrible when he had discovered that his master was dead. He had set out on the trail of the murderers.

Ever since then he had hounded the Strawhan Gang. One by one he had killed off the gang, until now only Strawhan remained.

Strawhan had joined up with these other men merely because he was afraid to remain alone, and he had not dared tell them of the monster which was hunting him.

It was O'Neil, the Six-Gun Gorilla, which he had just glimpsed amongst the trees on the slope, and not a sheriff! O'Neil was coming, and Tutt Strawhan knew what that meant.

A shout from the top of the mine shaft took the other ruffians over to the windlass. The miners were wanting to come up. They still knew nothing of the fate of their comrades.

Tutt Strawhan was left alone in the stone cabin. He closed and bolted the door. He had decided to remain there. He dared not flee alone. He simply had to have these men with him. There was just a chance that they might be able to deal with the great creature, but the gang leader had not very much hope of that. Revolver bullets seemed to have no effect on O'Neil.

Over at the shaft the windlass was coming up. Two of the gunmen were winding at the handle whilst two others stood by with drawn revolvers.

An iron bucket came to the surface. Two grimy-looking men were standing in it, clutching at the rope. As it swung close to the side of the shaft they jumped nimbly off.

Their day's toil was done. They sighed with relief as the cool air struck their faces, then gulped when revolvers were jabbed into their sides.

"Hands up! One shout out o' you, an' it'll be your last!"

The miners were trapped. Dumbly they gazed around at the four tight-lipped men who had awaited them. The bucket was already being sent down for two of their comrades. There was no chance of warning them. They themselves were now being herded away from the side of the shaft, and their hands were quickly roped behind them.

"What—what's it all mean?" gasped one of them.

"You'll know in good time," growled one of the gunmen. "You keep your mouth shut, or it'll be the worse for you!"

Two more miners were brought to the surface and likewise trapped. The bucket went

down for the one remaining miner.

This one, as he came to the surface, saw the guns levelled before he was properly clear of the shaft. So great was his surprise that he lost his balance and fell backwards down the shaft. He must have been killed instantly.

That did not worry the gunmen. They drove their four prisoners into a corner against the big dump of earth and ore which had been excavated from the mine.

"You guys know what we're here for" snarled one tough, a man named Gorman. "We want the gold. Where is it?"

The miners looked grimly at each other. They were hard-working men who had formed a little syndicate to run this property. All their life's work would be made worthless if they gave up their store of gold. It was better to die than do that.

"We've sent it all to the nearest bank," croaked one.

He received a brutal blow in the face.

"Nix on that!" snarled Gorman. "Don't try to stall us off. We know durn well it's here, an' we mean to get it. If someone don't tell us in two minutes we'll shoot the little guy with the moustache first, then each of you others at intervals of five minutes."

Gorman meant what he said. The miners saw that they were up against utterly ruthless killers. Lives meant nothing to these outlaws. Gold was the only thing they craved.

One of the four miners began to weaken.

"Better--better tell 'em!" he gasped.

Crack! Gorman had seen that the fellow's nerve was breaking, and had decided to take full advantage of it. He had fired a shot within an inch of the miner's head.

"Yes, you'd better tell!" he roared. "Out with it! Where's that gold?"

In another moment the secret would have been out, but the sudden bark of a gun from behind the killers was followed by the collapse of one of the outlaws. He had been shot in the back by a heavy .45 bullet.

The others spun round, and their guns nearly dropped from their hands. Their mouths dried with fear when they saw who had fired the shot.

They had expected to see a sheriff, with perhaps a posse, but what now confronted them was a mighty gorilla, well over six feet tall, with a huge chest, a face like a fiend, and a smoking gun in its hand.

A bandolier was across one huge shoulder. Red eyes glared from under shaggy brows. O'Neil was on the warpath.

He had tracked Tutt Strawhan to this spot, and had been creeping up with the intention of seizing him unawares, when Gorman had fired that solitary shot. The Six-Gun Gorilla had immediately concluded that someone was shooting at him. This was his retaliation, and at that short range it had been impossible for him to miss.

"Wh-what is it?" murmured one of the scoundrels, feebly. "It ain't a man. It ain't an Injun——!"

None of them had ever seen a gorilla before. To them it was something fantastic, something out of a nightmare. They were too terrified even to use their guns.

O'Neil snarled, and Gorman instinctively tightened his finger on the trigger of his gun. He had not intended to fire, but the gun went off with a loud report, and a shot struck the ground near O'Neil's foot.

The Six-Gun Gorilla roared loudly, and fired as rapidly as his hairy finger could press the trigger. The bullets went in all directions. The captive miners narrowly escaped being hit. One of the remaining three gunmen was shot through the head. The other two turned and fled.

After them went O'Neil. His blood was up. Usually he did not harm ordinary men. To-day he was angry because he believed that these men who had fired at him were friends of Tutt Strawhan's, and were protecting the gang leader. O'Neil wanted to smash them or kill them, just as he had killed the rest of the Strawhan Gang.

He covered the ground in great leaps and bounds. He had fired all the shots in the chambers of his gun, so that the weapon was useless until reloaded.

The two desperate men fired over their shoulders. Once or twice their bullets went close to the gorilla, but the sight of their terrible pursuer unnerved the fleeing men so much that they could not aim properly.

The last the four astonished miners saw of their strange rescuer was O'Neil following the two gunmen into the thick scrub on the hillside. Shortly afterwards they heard terrible screams and roars.

Then, to their surprise, the door of the stone store hut opened, and a wild-eyed man came running out. At each hip swung a six-gun, but he did not attempt to use them.

What is a Congo Canary? Have YOU ever seen one? What does it look like? What would you do if you got one in a present?

If you want to find the answer to these questions, book your next week's "Wizard" now.

There's going to be a regular stampede to read this sensational new story——

"THE CONGO CANARY"

REMEMBER — IT STARTS NEXT TUESDAY!

Instead he came rushing up to the miners, cut the ropes that bound them, and dropped on his knees before them.

"I'm Tutt Strawhan, the leader of these men who tried to kill you!" he babbled. "Take me away from here. Put me under arrest. Lock me up. Do anything you like with me, but don't leave me alone with that gorilla!"

The Search for the Slayer

WHAT Strawhan had seen and heard had completely broken his nerve. He was ready to give himself up to the Law rather than come face to face with O'Neil lone-handed. The Law might be able to protect him.

The miners looked at him in amazement.

"Guess he's crazy!" grunted one of them. "Who did he say he was?"

"I'm Tutt Strawhan, you must have heard of me! There's a reward of five thousand dollars offered for me in this State. You'll get that if you take me in. Take me back to Denver—anywhere away from here!"

He dropped his guns at their feet. One of the miners picked them up.

"If you're responsible for what's happened here the best thing we can do is to shoot you here an' now," he growled.

Tutt Strawhan looked pleadingly at the miner.

"No, no, I'm worth five thousand dollars alive, I tell you!" he gasped.

With trembling fingers he drew a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket, and the miners saw that he was speaking the truth. Printed on the bill was a photograph of Strawhan, with a list of some of his earlier crimes underneath it, and an offer of five thousand dollars if he was brought in alive.

"It's true enough," murmured the leader of the miners. "He's the guy on the picture. Five thousand dollars is a lot o' money. It might be worth while handin' the rat over alive."

"Yes, yes, but you've got to save me from the gorilla!" panted Strawhan, clutching at their knees. "He's killed those other men. He's after me. He'll be back soon. He's reloading that gun, that's what he's doing. He'll be back for me any time now. Put me somewhere safe. Put me down the mine!"

"Eh?" demanded the startled miner. "That's an idea. If that gorilla is really after him——"

"It is!" gasped Strawhan. "It's followed me for months. It's nearly driven me mad. I shot its master, an' it's never forgotten. It'll kill me, an' you'll lose five thousand dollars unless you put me down the mine."

The miners muttered amongst themselves. They were beginning to believe Strawhan's ravings. They had seen the Six-Gun Gorilla in action, and knew that the great beast was quite capable of doing all that Strawhan threatened it would do.

"Down the mine! Down the mine!" whimpered Strawhan.

Nobody who had known him in his bullying, triumphant days would have recognised the notorious Tutt Strawhan now. He was a broken man, seeking protection from this terrible monster which had followed him so far.

The miners finally agreed to Strawhan's plan. They lifted the gang leader and put him in the bucket. One of the others climbed in and balanced himself beside the prisoner.

"Lower away!" he growled, and the winch creaked as the other two worked the handles. "I'll tie him up and leave him at the head of the tunnel."

Ten minutes later the man who had taken the gunman down the mine was hauled up the shaft. He told his comrades that he had made sure that Strawhan would not escape.

The four miners began to look around the small camp and see the damage that had been done by the raiders. They muttered with fury when they came across the bodies of their dead comrades.

They carried the two bodies to the store room and covered them over with sacks. They were so busy doing this that they did not see the monstrous figure which stumbled across the clearing.

They did not know of its approach until a shadow fell across the door, and they hurriedly turned to find themselves face to face with the Six-Gun Gorilla.

He was pointing his revolver at them, and instinctively two of the four men raised their hands into the air. O'Neil did not fire. He did not make a sound, but his lips moved in a noiseless snarl. His fierce eyes were searching the room.

He saw the two covered figures, and snarled. He knew that these two men were dead. Slowly, walking awkwardly on his massive hindlegs, he crossed the room and jerked away the sacks. He wanted to see the faces of the dead men. He wanted to know if Strawhan was one of those still figures.

A grunt escaped him when he saw that this was not the case. He turned, and without paying any more attention to the four trembling miners, he went from the hut.

They watched him lumber into the shack in which they lived, and heard him opening and closing doors. They saw him peer into the wood shed where they kept their stamping machine. O'Neil did not miss a single corner.

"Strawhan told the truth!" whispered one miner. "The brute's looking for him. He doesn't want anything to do with us."

Fascinated and frightened by the strange sight they watched closely as the Six-Gun Gorilla completed his tour of inspection of the mining camp. As he neared the end of his search, and proved to his satisfaction that the man he wanted was not in the camp, O'Neil flew into a rage. He put his gun back in its holster and beat his chest with his clenched fists, roaring at the same time

in a voice that could have been heard a mile away.

Thus O'Neil expressed his disappointment at his failure to find the man he sought. The shivering miners remained under cover. One of them suggested getting the express rifle and trying to shoot the animal, but the others checked him. They said that it was better to leave their visitor alone. He might go away soon.

On one occasion O'Neil went to the head of the mine shaft and sniffed. It looked as though he had discovered the hiding-place of the man he sought, but evidently he was not certain about it. He shook his head dubiously, then ambled away, snorting and roaring in turn.

He was puzzled and bewildered. The tracks of Tutt Strawhan led to the mining camp, yet the man was not here. The brain of the gorilla could not cope with this.

It was lucky for the miners that he did not turn on them, or suspect that they were hiding his hated foe. He vented his rage on some trees, uprooting them as easily as if they had been bushes, then he went back into the scrub and vanished from sight.

The miners sighed with relief.

By this time it was getting dark, and the miners ventured to light a stove and prepare a meal. Sitting round the crude table, talking over the amazing events of the day, by the light of an oil lamp, they suddenly became conscious of a face at the window.

It was the hideous face of O'Neil. His flat nose was pressed to the window pane, and his fierce eyes were scanning the room. For two or three minutes he remained motionless, then he turned and vanished into the darkness.

One of the miners licked his lips.

"He's still around," he growled. "He doesn't intend to give up. He means to get Strawhan at some time or other. Think he guesses we've got him stowed away?"

None of his comrades could say, but they did not eat their supper after that. They had lost their appetites.

They did not sleep a wink that night, though they barricaded themselves in their shack. They could hear O'Neil prowling around the camp. He was still on the watch for Tutt Strawhan. He still had a feeling that his enemy was somewhere in the vicinity.

Morning found the miners dark-eyed and weary. There was nothing to be seen of the Six-Gun Gorilla, but his footprints were all over the place. The miners guessed that he was not far away.

They were almost afraid to go down the mine with food and water for their prisoner. They feared that O'Neil might notice them and guess what they were doing.

However, that morning he did not appear at all, and the miners began to think that he had really gone away. They began to discuss what they should do.

They wanted to report what had happened to the nearest sheriff, and to hand over their prisoner. The sooner they did this the sooner they could apply for the reward. They discussed ways and means of handing Strawhan over.

None of them was inclined to remain at the mine alone. They decided to shut the place up for a while, and all accompany their prisoner to the nearest settlement, which was a good twenty miles distant. How to smuggle Strawhan past the gorilla was their greatest problem.

By now they were determined to protect Strawhan at any cost, simply because he was worth five thousand dollars to them alive.

In the end they decided to wait for two days, by which time O'Neil would almost certainly have left the neighbourhood.

The two days passed. Strawhan remained a prisoner in the mine, never once complaining of his fate. He felt safe there. He would have remained there forever quite willingly.

The miners went down to him on the third morning and said that they were going to take him to Loshkosh Valley, which was the nearest settlement to the mining camp. Strawhan licked his lips feverishly and demanded:

"The gorilla—where is it?"

"We haven't seen it for nearly three days," growled one of the miners. "It's cleared off somewhere else. We mean to leave here at dusk to-night, an' ride straight through. We've got a hoss for you."

Strawhan said that he would like to remain in the mine for another week in order to make sure that the Six-Gun Gorilla had gone. The miners refused this request, and they set about making preparations for their departure. The prisoner was brought up from the mine and lodged in their shack. They collected the hidden gold-dust, and saddled their horses.

The horses were already tethered outside the shack, and the miners were collecting a few articles of clothing to stuff into their duffle-bags, when there came the sound of a terrific commotion outside. The horses were rearing on their hindlegs, kicking, squealing and trying to break loose.

Tutt Strawhan made a dive for the underside of the table.

"The gorilla!" he gasped. "It's back again. The horses have scented it. That's why they're scared. Save me! It'll be here in a minute! It can smell me!"

The miners knew that the killer was right. One of them reported that he could see the dark figure of the gorilla crossing the clearing, obviously making for their shack. O'Neil's gun was still at his hip. He was sniffing the air as though he detected something that interested him.

"He can smell me! He can smell me!" repeated Strawhan.

The Blockaded Mine

"WE'LL soon fix that!" growled one of the miners, and he opened a bottle of strong-smelling hair oil, which he kept for use for his occasional visits to a town, and emptied it on the floor.

The scent was almost overpowering. It made the other men cough. Strawhan whimpered to silence as he crouched under the table in the darkest corner of the room.

Someone rattled at the door. O'Neil was trying to lift the latch, and could not. He was coming to make another inspection.

Angered by his failure to open the door, the Six-Gun Gorilla gave it a terrific punch with his fist, and two panels burst inward. The miners cowered back against the wall, screening the hidden man with their legs.

The head of the gorilla came through the hole, and his broad nostrils twiched as he got the scent of the hair oil. He glanced round the room inquisitively.

O'Neil could not see Strawhan, and he certainly could not smell him. He could smell nothing but the hair oil.

Grumbling and grunting to himself, he withdrew his head and ambled away, leaving behind him a ruined door and five thoroughly frightened men.

Suddenly one of the miners lost his temper.

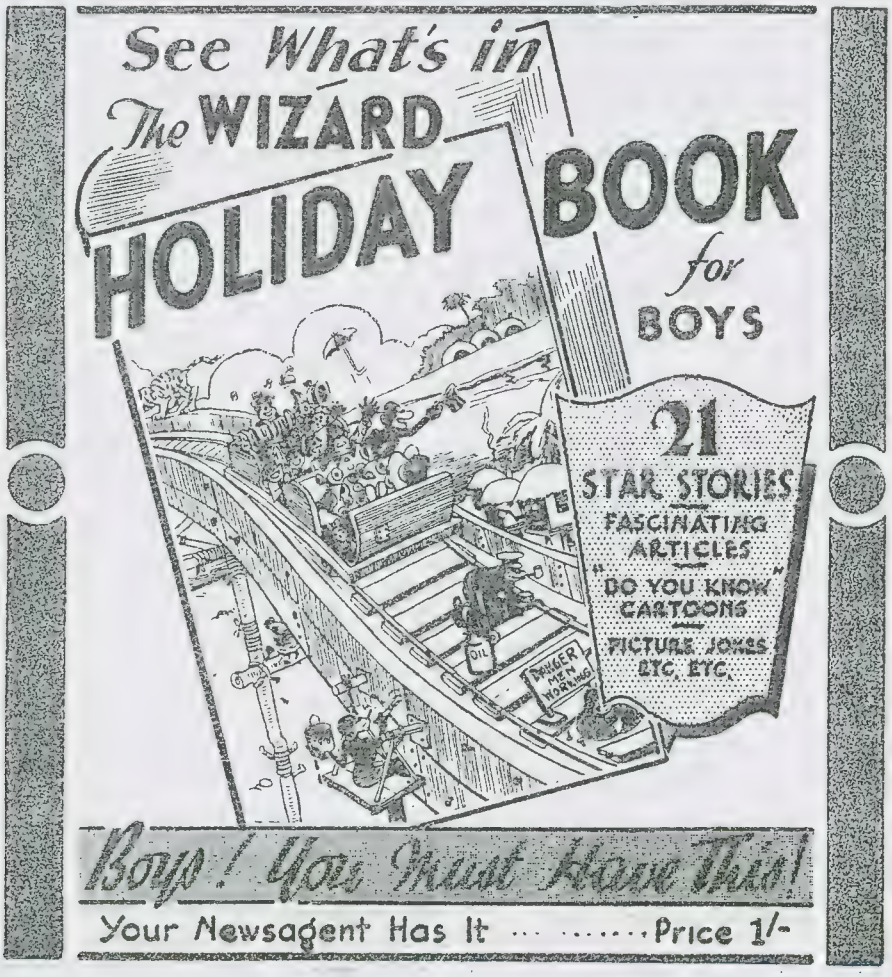
"Durn it!" he growled. "How long are we going to put up with this? We can't always sit around here because a durn gorilla says so! We've got to do something about it. We'll simply have to kill it somehow. What about trying to trap it?"

The rest of the miners liked the idea. Whilst Strawhan remained on the floor afraid to let himself be seen through the window, they discussed how they could trap the gorilla.

One of them remembered how an enormous bear had been trapped in Kansas after it had terrorised a whole camp for a month. He described the trap which had been used.

"Trouble is to know what to use for bait," he grunted. "What do these gorillas eat? What do they like best? You ought to know, Strawhan."

Tutt Strawhan did not know, and was in no condition to make suggestions. None of the miners knew anything about gorillas, but



one said that he thought that fruit was a favourite food with the great apes.

To get fruit up at that mining camp was out of the question. The miners had none. Then they decided to try something sweet. They had several pots of jam and honey. Those might do the trick.

Far into the night the planning men talked, and the next morning, when they had made sure that the gorilla was not watching, they smuggled Tutt Strawhan back into the mine.

Then they set to work to make their trap, a huge, clumsy affair of massive timbers. It was to have a drop-door with iron bars, and the "bait" was a plank of wood heavily smeared with honey and jam.

They set it up near their own shack, and felt sure that when O'Neil made his next tour of inspection he would nose inside the trap to see if Strawhan was hidden there. If the gorilla as much as touched the plank on which the jam was spread, the heavy door would come down.

The miners were proud of their trap, and the man who took Strawhan his meal that evening told the killer that he would not need to worry much longer. O'Neil would soon be in the trap, and once he was caught the miners would find means of killing him.

That evening they went to their bunks keyed up with excitement. They took it in turn to keep awake to listen for the thud of the door of the trap.

The first part of the night passed without incident. It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the watching miner roused his comrades and whispered that he heard O'Neil prowling about.

Loud snuffling and snorting made it obvious that the Six-Gun Gorilla was on the prowl again. The miners heard him open and close several doors. O'Neil was leaving nothing to chance.

The four watching men looked at each other excitedly as they heard the sinister noises close outside the shack. The gorilla was nearing the trap. They heard him stop and grunt again. He had seen the trap for the first time, and was examining it.

Then came the sound for which they had earnestly hoped—the heavy thud which told them that the massive door of the trap had closed. A roar from the trapped gorilla followed.

The four men dashed for the door of their shack. They almost wedged themselves in the doorway in their eagerness to get out. From the huge cage came the most terrible din imaginable. O'Neil seemed to have gone mad.

The miners reached the trap and found it rocking to and fro, in spite of its weight. O'Neil was safely inside, and had hold of the iron bars with his powerful hands, shaking and straining at them in a desperate effort to break free.

"Not this time, me beauty!" jeered one of the miners. "Those bars would stand the weight of an elephant. You won't get out of there. We're sorry for you, old pal, but you've sure made yourself a nuisance. We'll have to shoot you."

One of the miners had brought an express rifle. It was loaded and ready. He tried to manœuvre it into a position from which he could but a bullet through the gorilla's brain, but the light was not good, and it took him some time to find the right position.

Crack! He had fired at last, but at that same second O'Neil had dropped on all fours. Instead of going through his brain as intended the shot just grazed his back.

He gave vent to a roar which outdid all his previous efforts. Then, with remarkable speed for such a clumsy-looking animal, he snatched for his revolver.

Batt Masters had trained his pet to be quick on the draw, and before those astonished miners knew what was happening a fusillade of bullets was whining about them.

O'Neil was no marksman. He just pointed a gun and pulled the trigger, but that could produce results at times, and one of the miners groaned as his arm was shattered [illegible] instead of going after the miners

It happened to be the man with the express rifle, and in his eagerness to get away from the gorilla he dropped the rifle on the ground, not many feet from the bars of the trap.

The Six-Gun Gorilla knew that it was this weapon which had been fired at him. One long, hairy arm came out between the bars of the trap, and a moment later the rifle was in his grasp. The next minute O'Neil had snapped the gun across his knee.

The miners hastily scattered for cover. They had forgotten that the Six-Gun Gorilla was armed! They had forgotten that they had trapped something almost human, which could hit back.

Seeing that he had driven his foes away O'Neil squatted down in the bottom of the trap and proceeded to reload his revolver. The miners peered at him from a safe distance.

They had lost the only rifle they had possessed. The only weapons they had now were revolvers, and they knew well enough that an ordinary revolver bullet would do very little damage to O'Neil.

Their plan to trap O'Neil had seemed a good one the previous evening. Now they were not so pleased with it. All they had done was to trap O'Neil and annoy him. Whether they could keep him in the trap or not was a different matter. They had only intended holding him there the few minutes that it would have taken to kill him. Already a terrific din from the direction of the cage indicated that he was breaking his way out.

The bars were too strong even for O'Neil, but he had got his thick fingers between two baulks of timber, and was slowly but surely prising them apart. Once he got his whole arm into the gap he gave a heave which burst the trap asunder, then walked out without further trouble.

His gun was in his hand. His eyes were angry. Low, rumbling noises came from the depths of his throat, and the watching miners trembled. They felt sure that O'Neil was going to avenge himself on them. They drew their revolvers in readiness.

O'Neil had no desire to kill anyone except Tutt Strawhan, however. The gorilla was furious—but not in murderous mood—

their quarters and avenged itself by smashing everything in the place. O'Neil finished his work by throwing the remains of the miners' belongings out through the door. Then he stalked majestically away.

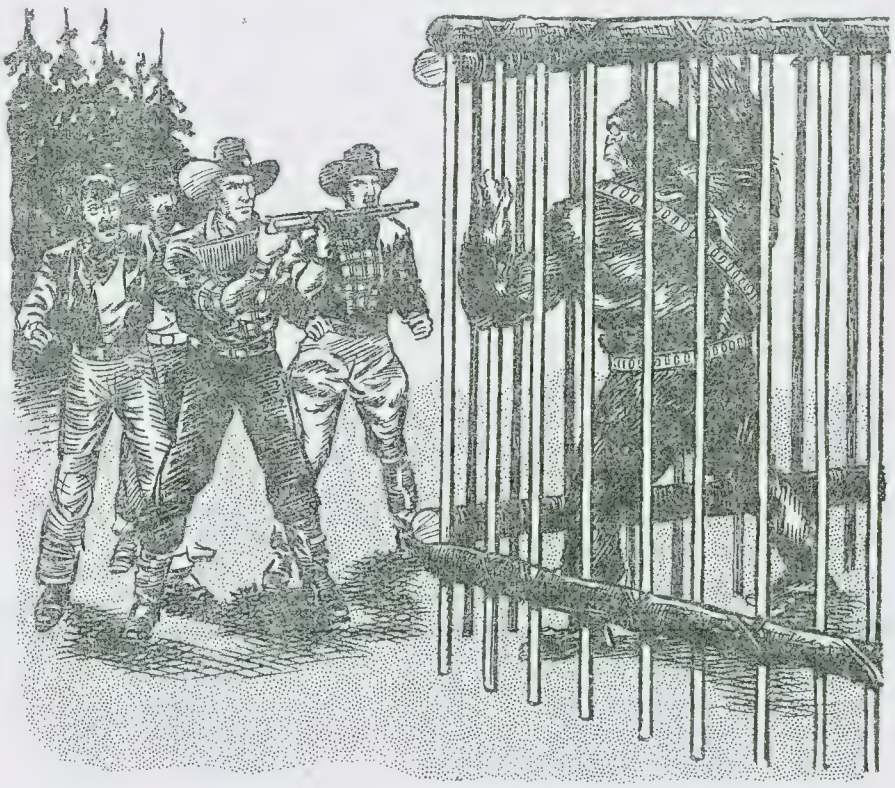
It was just as though he had said:

"Let that be a lesson to you. Don't try any tricks on me again."

The miners licked their parched lips and crept back to tidy up the wreckage. It was not so easy to get rid of the Six-Gun Gorilla after all. It seemed ridiculous that four fully-grown, intelligent men should be blockaded in this fashion by a gorilla, but such was the case

It began to look as though Tutt Strawhan would spend the rest of his life in the mine, and as though that five thousand dollars' reward would never be secured.

Daylight was showing over the mountains when the leader of the miners had another brainwave.



As O'Neil strained at the bars of the cage, one of the miners squeezed the trigger of his express rifle. Was this to be the end of the gorilla's vengeance trail?

"I've got it!" he whooped. "You saw how we fooled the gorilla in the shack when Strawhan hid under the table. The gorilla couldn't see Strawhan or smell him, so it didn't think he was there."

"Well?" chorussed the other men.

"We can do that in another way!" snapped the leader. "We'll make a box like a coffin, big enough to hold Strawhan, an' we'll paint it all over with that Stockholm tar we've got. That stinks like anything. We'll put it on thick. Then we'll get Strawhan inside the box an' take him away right under the nose of the gorilla. I bet that after one sniff of the tar the brute will go away."

The idea seemed a good one. The miners set to work making the box, whilst Tutt Strawhan remained hidden in the mine, still in a state of acute terror, and whilst O'Neil roamed the slopes around the camp, still intent on discovering what had happened to the man who had murdered his master.

Will the tarred box fool the Six-Gun Gorilla? Don't miss next week's thrilling instalment of this great story, and make sure your "Wizard" contains No. 11 of the great FREE "Battles For The

Read how the music of a mechanical piano enables Tutt Strawhan to escape two different deaths !

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Will the Tar Trick O'Neil ?

THE Conifer Mine was one of the loneliest in Colorado, and for several days it had been blockaded—by a gorilla.

Four miners only remained alive in the place, but there was a fifth man down at the bottom of the mine, who had his arms tied behind him, and his ears strained for sounds from above.

Tutt Strawhan was his name, and he was a gunman with an evil reputation. There had been a time when he had been the leader of the most feared gang in Colorado. But at the moment he was in fear of his life, glad to be kept at the bottom of the deep shaft.

Some months before this, when he had had a large gang around him, he had heard of a small gold mine owned and worked by an old miner named Bart Masters.

Masters had worked the mine for seven years, aided by a gorilla, which he had purchased from a sailor.

O'Neil was the name he had given it, and O'Neil had become his constant companion. The miner had taught the great beast to be useful in many ways. It could dig, bring in firewood, or haul up buckets of ore from the mine shaft, and what was more important, it had been taught to use a revolver.

Then the Strawhan gang had arrived, shot Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and had made off with about ten thousand pounds' worth of gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and had nearly gone mad when he had discovered that his master was dead. He had set out on the trail of the murderers.

Ever since then he had hounded the gang. One by one he had killed them off, until now only Strawhan remained.

Accompanied by several other toughs, Tutt Strawhan had come to the Conifer Mine to rob it. They had all been killed when the gorilla had arrived on the scene, and now Strawhan was glad to be the prisoner of the remaining miners.

He had even convinced them that he was worth five thousand dollars, the reward they would be given if they got him to the nearest sheriff alive. The gunman preferred to be in the hands of the law rather than suffer the end O'Neil would give him. He knew there might be a chance of escape from the sheriff later on.

But when the miners had attempted to take their prisoner to the nearest settlement they had come up against a difficulty.

O'Neil was still waiting for Strawhan. The Six-Gun Gorilla had already searched the mine buildings on more than one occasion, trying to find the man whom he had followed for so long.

The miners had tried to kill the huge brute and had failed. They had captured O'Neil, but he had escaped from the trap.

He watched the mine like a lynx. If the miners had attempted to ride away with Strawhan he would have pounced.

At last they had thought out what appeared to be a good plan. They knew that O'Neil tracked down Strawhan by both sight and smell. If O'Neil could neither see nor smell the gang leader, he would not know he was there.

That was why the miners were engaged in making a big, stout, wooden case shaped something like a coffin. It was intended for the transport of Strawhan. The miners had explained to him about it, and he was quite prepared to travel in that fashion as long as they took precautions to prevent the gorilla from smelling him out.

This the miners were going to do by painting the case thickly with strong-smelling Stockholm tar.

So they worked as rapidly as they could, only stopping once when a shadow fell across them, and they looked up to find O'Neil looming over them.

He had seen the closed box which they were preparing to smooth down for paint, and he was suspicious.

Well over six feet tall, with a broad, barrel-like chest, the gorilla was a terrifying sight apart from the gunbelt and the bandolier which he wore.

They scattered as he advanced upon them, one huge paw outstretched. He gripped the long box, and with one mighty heave had it upside down.

The hinged lid fell open, revealing nothing inside. The Six-Gun Gorilla sniffed and peered into the interior, then walked away.

He was no longer interested in the box. He had believed it might hold Strawhan. He saw that he had been mistaken.

The miners watched him retreat to his usual position on the hill overlooking the mine, then mopped their foreheads.

"I thought we were gonners that time!" muttered one man. "He looked as though he understood what we were up to. I believe that gorilla can think like a man."

"Rot!" grunted another. "Of course he can't. It's just instinct with him. He's as stupid as any other animal."

His companions did not agree with him. They could not imagine any stupid animal using a gun as expertly as O'Neil did.

The case was finished just before nightfall, and duly tarred. By the time the miners had finished doing this, the case looked like a sinister black coffin.

After taking every precaution to see that the coast was clear, they lowered the coffin to the bottom of the mine shaft, and two of them went down the rope.

Down there by the light of a lantern they lifted the once-feared gunman into the box, and closed down the lid. Holes had been left so that he would not suffocate for want of air.

The box with its occupant was then attached to the rope which ran to the hoist, and the other two miners hauled it to the top of the shaft.

The two miners who had done the work below next came up, and in due course the four of them hoisted the heavy box to the back of a horse, and lashed it in place.

"There's no sign of him," one of them told the trembling Strawhan through an air hole. "You can take it easy, but don't make a row whatever happens."

"Trust me!" replied the man inside. "Hurry up an' get going."

The miners had taken all the things they

ceded for the journey, and their horses were ready. Before long they were on their way up the narrow trail leading to the top of the valley.

One man rode in front, leading the horse to which the box and some camping equipment was tied. The other three miners came behind.

All of them were breathless with excitement. Since O'Neil had smashed their only rifle, they had nothing but revolvers with which to defend themselves. They knew that these weapons were almost useless against O'Neil.

As they neared the top of the valley they scanned the surrounding bushes anxiously.

The four miners reached the edge of the woods beyond the valley, and the horse of the leading miner suddenly reared. A gigantic shape dropped out of a tree right in front of the horse. The frightened beast would have turned and bolted if a hairy hand had not seized the rein and held it fast

The new arrival was O'Neil.

He made no sound, but his lips were drawn back from his long fangs in a snarl. His eyes glowed savagely.

The four miners swallowed hard.

Now their plan to save Strawhan from the gorilla would be put to the test. Their hearts beat violently as they checked their horses and watched O'Neil sniffing the air.

It was the big box on the second horse that interested him. He reached up and touched the ropes by which it was tied to the animal's back. The horse at once reared, and the ropes broke.

To the horror of the watching miners, the case crashed upside down on to the ground.

If Strawhan had uttered a sound at that moment he would have been lost, but such was his fear of the huge animal outside that he kept his mouth shut.

The gorilla turned the case up on one end, and sniffed it closely. Then it wrinkled its nose, shook its head, and turned away.

The miners glanced at each other in triumph The Stockholm tar had done the trick. It had such a strong smell that O'Neil could scent nothing else.

The Six-Gun Gorilla stalked away down the slope towards the camp.

He had not the slightest objection to these four men going away. He wanted only one person, and he still believed him to be somewhere in the mine.

Hardly yet able to believe their good luck, the four miners again lashed the box to the horse, soothed their mounts, and rode swiftly away.

Before they had gone very far they heard a mighty roaring, and a sound like a drum being beaten.

O'Neil had again searched the mining camp without success, and was again expressing his anger and disappointment by hammering on his chest.

He knew that he was being tricked, but he could not understand how.

The Man Who Refused to be Rescued

NEVER had four men travelled faster than those four miners as they rode from the Conifer Mine. All through the night they travelled, and when they were about a dozen miles from the mine they suggested taking Strawhan out of the box and letting him ride the horse.

The gunman refused the offer point-blank.

"Let me stop in here," he pleaded. "The gorilla might come back again. Leave me where I am. I feel safer here. Don't take any risks yet."

So the miners left him where he was, and as dawn was breaking they sighted the little township for which they had been heading. It was a small place, but it had a sheriff's office, and there were a good many men in the district who were willing to form a posse when required. For that reason the place had become the recognised centre of law and order in that region.

The little procession pulled up outside the sheriff's office just as that worthy sleepily opened the door.

"Hey, Sheriff, we've got a prisoner for you, one worth five thousand dollars!" cried one of the miners.

"Eh, what's that? What are you talking about?" demanded the sheriff.

"About Tutt Strawhan, who's wanted for a dozen murders," replied the miner, and he pulled out the reward notice which Strawhan had given them to prove his identity. "It says that five thousand dollars' reward is offered for him."

Sheriff Lucas read through the notice.

"Yes, the State would be willing to give five thousand dollars for Tutt Strawhan, but he's been out of the district some time," he grunted.

"He's back again now," said the miner gleefully. "We've got him."

The sheriff snorted impatiently.

"Who are you trying to fool?" he growled.

The miners looked round them cautiously, straining their eyes to make sure there was no tell-tale cloud of dust on the horizon that might be O'Neil.

All seemed clear however, and one of them pointed to the black box.

"He's in there," he said.

Sheriff Lucas looked disappointed.

"I don't want the job o' burying him," he grunted. "What made you get a coffin for him? I'd have left him to the coyotes."

"But he's not dead!" protested one of the men, as he helped to loosen the ropes. "He's in there alive. We wanted to carry him inside this box. If you take our tip you'll keep him there most of the time, or you'll lose him."

Between them the miners carried their burden into the office, locked the door behind the astonished sheriff, then raised the lid of the box. The sheriff took one look at the half-suffocated man inside, and his eyes bulged.

"By hookey, it is Strawhan!" he gasped. "It's the rat himself! I'd never have believed it possible. How did you manage to take him? He swore he'd never be taken alive."

"He gave himself up," was the reply. "He begged us to take him and bring him somewhere like this. You see, there's a gorilla after him."

"A gorilla! Are you crazy?"

"Not a chance," chorussed the miners. We've seen the brute a hundred times. It's after him right enough—and with a gun."

The idea of a gorilla being after anyone in Colorado, least of all a gorilla with a gun, seemed ridiculous to Sheriff Lucas.

But the miners told their story, warned him never to let the gorilla get near Strawhan, and asked how long it would be before they got the reward.

Sheriff Lucas rubbed his chin.

"I don't handle that," he said. "It's a State matter. I'll take him into Denver, an' then I'll give in the names of you men as being entitled to the reward. But as for this gorilla——"

"It's the most dangerous thing in the world!" croaked Strawhan. "It has the strength of ten men, an' can shoot straight. It's killed all my pals, one after the other. Now it wants to get me. It's after me day and night, but I'll cheat it. You'll have to look after me—you'll have to. I'm your prisoner."

The five men finally convinced the sheriff what fear the great creature had inspired, and how serious a menace it was. He took Strawhan to the innermost of the two cells which the lock-up possessed.

"Don't you worry, Strawhan," he said grimly. "If it's the last thing I do in life I'm going to see you hanged. No gorilla is going to take you from me. To-morrow we start for Denver, an' there you'll be tried."

"Can't we start to-day?" asked the terrified gunman.

"We can't!" was the emphatic reply, and another door closed with a thud behind the departing sheriff.

"Guess we'd best say nothing about the gorilla to the folks in town," muttered the sheriff to the four men who had brought him his important prisoner. "It ain't likely to come as far as this, an' we don't want to scare people for nothing."

The miners agreed, and so it was that when the news spread through the township that day that Tutt Strawhan had been brought in, nothing was said about the reason why he had surrendered. Everyone thought he had been taken in a gun fight.

Amongst those who heard the news were two dark, quiet-looking men who had been standing all day in one of the saloons, and presently strolled out to their horses.

"Hear that? Tutt Strawhan's been taken. They must have got him in a tight corner," murmured one of the men. "Remember the time we did that Greenbank robbery with him, an' netted two thousand dollars each? Reckon we owe it to him to get him out of jail."

"You bet!" replied his companion in a whisper. "We'll wait till it's dark. That lock-up ain't very strong."

So the two men who had once been friends of the notorious gunman planned to rescue him, little guessing that that was the last thing Strawhan would have wished them to do.

Their chance did not come till after dark, and only then because a couple of roughnecks from a mining camp blew into the town and started a fight in one of the saloons.

Sheriff Lucas rushed to the spot to try to restore order, and the lock-up was for the time being unattended.

The two strangers made their way round to the back of the place, forced a window, and climbed inside.

There was yet another door barring them

REGIMENTAL MASCOTS

The Goat of the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

THE Royal Welch Fusiliers have a goat as their mascot. He is one of the best-dressed goats in the Army, and when on parade he even has his horns gilded!

The first Royal goat was given to the regiment from the Royal herd in Windsor Park by Queen Victoria in 1844. This practice has been continued ever since when a fresh goat has been required.

He plays a big part in national ceremonies.

Just as the pipers in Scottish regiments play the pipes when the Haggis is eaten, the goat comes to the officers' mess of the Welch Fusiliers on 1st March, which is St David's Day.

He walks majestically round the dinner table when the ceremony of "Eating the Leek" is observed.

But he eats other things besides leeks.

One goat was so fond of paper that one Christmas Day he made a meal of the decorations hung up in the barracks. The crinkled paper did not worry him, but, alas, the paste which stuck it together was too much, even for a goat.

The paste acted on the paper and swelled him up like a gasometer. That was the last of that goat!

(World Copyright Reserved.)

Learn more about British regiments by saving up "Battles for the Flag" cards. The one to be given FREE in "The Wizard" next Tuesday is—

THE BLACK WATCH.

"Forward the 42nd!" at the Alma.

from the corridor leading to the two cells, and they had some difficulty in getting this open. If there had not been such an uproar going on in the town they would certainly have been heard.

At last they reached the door of Strawhan's cell, and one of them called—

"Tutt Strawhan, are you there? It's Baldy Peters speaking."

"Yes, I'm here, Baldy. What the heck's the matter?" asked the prisoner, who had been dozing until the recent outburst of noise. "What's going on?"

"Never you mind," was the answer. "Keep out of the way of that lock!"

"Hey!" came the alarmed cry. "What's the idea? Don't——"

Crack! Baldy Peters had drawn his gun and fired into the lock of the door. The bullet shattered the lock, and the door of the cell swung open. When the smoke cleared, the would-be rescuers saw Tutt Strawhan pressed against the wall, regarding them with horror and anger.

"Get out!" he roared. "Leave me alone! What have you come butting in here for?"

Baldy Peters and his companion stared in blank amazement.

"But you're free, Tutt, free to go!" they gasped. "There are plenty of hosses about, an' there's a scrimmage goin' on down the street. All the guys in town are too busy to notice anything up here. You can make a bolt for it."

As they spoke they got hold of Strawhan's arms and tried to pull him towards the door. To their surprise the prisoner tore himself free, pushed them violently into the corridor, and slammed the door, holding it with his weight.

"Go away, I say, go away!" he panted. "I don't want to escape. It's still after me. If I went out there it might get me. This way I have a few weeks to live, and maybe in Denver I can escape. I don't want to be out where you are. Beat it!"

It was amazing to see a prisoner holding the door against the men who wished to rescue him. The two bandits were still staring in amazement when fresh uproar outside, more shots, and the sound of running feet near the lock-up made them think the sheriff was returning.

"He's mad! Come on!" hissed Baldy Peters, and he and his companion made for the back door with all possible speed.

Something out of the ordinary was certainly going on in the street outside. People were bellowing and shouting as though in fear. Amidst the din men could be heard crying—

"But what is it? It's got a gun!"

Tutt Strawhan heard these shouts, and turned a ghastly grey. He guessed what was happening. The Six-Gun Gorilla had arrived in the township, and was scaring everyone.

The prisoner groaned when he saw his cell door swing open directly he took his weight from it. If the gorilla smelled him out it would break its way into the jail, and he would be cornered. The lockless cell would no longer protect him.

Suddenly Strawhan remembered the cell next to him. He had seen the key in the lock.

Quickly he slipped out of his cell, slithered into the adjoining one, locked the door, and took the key with him to the furthest corner of the small chamber. A bunk had been constructed along the end wall, and there were blankets on it. Tutt Strawhan stretched himself out at full length and covered himself over with the blankets.

The noise in the street increased. People seemed to be running. Tutt Strawhan longed to look out of the small window and see what was happening, but he did not dare show himself.

As a matter of fact the Six-Gun Gorilla had arrived at the town in an angry mood. After searching the mine over and over again, he had decided that the four miners must have had something to do with Strawhan's disappearance.

No sooner had O'Neil decided this than he set off after them.

So when he arrived at this little town he was on the trail of the four miners, and his entry into the main street was rather like that of a bloodhound on the scent.

In one of the saloons a mechanical piano was playing. Someone had put in the necessary coin.

O'Neil stopped and stared. Music always interested him. It even made him forget why he had come to the town.

The evening was close, so the saloon door was open. Luckily it was a wide one, or the gigantic O'Neil would never have got through it.

He lurched into the room, and the first thing the group of men near the piano knew of his entry was when he fired a shot at the ceiling. It was his way of calling attention to himself.

It certainly worked. The occupants of the saloon spun round as one man, and their hands reached for their guns. They thought that perhaps another drunken miner had come in to shoot the place up.

But when they saw the hairy monster with the smoking gun in its fist they forgot to draw their own guns. All they could do was stare as if they had been petrified.

O'Neil slowly and deliberately made for the piano. He had no interest in anything else. He could see the keys bouncing up and down under their glass cover, and he was nodding his head in time to the music.

The Lure of the Music

THE men in the saloon shrank away from him, but there were four of their number who did more than that. They were the four miners who had brought Tutt Strawhan into the town, and they had been standing at one side of the saloon. Directly they saw the awful visitor they slipped quietly towards the door. A few moments later they were outside, running through the streets, shouting for the sheriff.

"The gorilla's here!" they yelled. "The gorilla's here! Look out for Tutt Strawhan!"

Back in the saloon the music suddenly stopped. O'Neil waited a few moments for it to begin again, then roared with rage when no sound came from the piano. He stamped his hairy foot, and brandished his gun.

He wanted the music to begin again. With one huge hand he took hold of the end of the mechanical piano and shook it vigorously. That did not start the music.

One of the watching men realised his trouble and thought that the music might keep this terrible intruder quiet a little longer. He hurriedly slipped in the necessary coin to make the piano go once more.

It looked as though those men would have to keep the piano supplied with coins all night long, for O'Neil never tired of music.

So whilst the music played the four miners brought warning to the sheriff.

"If you don't come quickly you'll lose Strawhan!" the miners told the lawman. "The Six-Gun Gorilla is here and on the warpath."

The sheriff wasted no time. Unslinging his guns, he followed the four determined men back towards the lock-up. They were eager to help him because they wanted to get their reward.

The first place they visited was the lock-up, to make sure O'Neil had not already been there.

Their disgust and alarm when they saw that the back door was open, the inside door forced, and the cell where Strawhan had been now empty, can hardly be imagined.

"He's gone! This wasn't the gorilla's work, or there'd be more damage done. His friends must have rescued him!" roared the sheriff. "He's gone, the skunk, an' we were worrying about protecting him from the gorilla."

WRIGLEY'S

keeps you going over any distance

Lots of famous runners chew WRIGLEY'S GUM. It keeps them fresh right through the race, and makes the last lap seem less gruelling. Take a packet of WRIGLEY'S to your Sports. There are two flavours, Spearmint and P.K.—both of them delicious. Buy some to-day.

Two famous flavours to choose from

E.T.23

The man under the blankets in the adjoining cell did not move. He was too terrified, afraid to speak lest the hairy monster outside should hear and recognise his voice.

So he let the miners and the sheriff go away believing that he had escaped. He heard them rushing down the street, and wished they had closed the door of the lock-up behind them. The more doors he had between him and the open the better he was pleased.

The angry miners saw their hopes of five thousand dollars fading. They blamed the sheriff. They were wrangling as they went along, until some men came hurrying to up to the sheriff to tell him that the Six-Gun Gorilla was in one of the saloons.

"To all accounts the brute's done more than enough damage," growled the sheriff, who was anxious to arrest someone to make up for his lost prisoner. "I'll fix that gorilla for good this time."

When he and the four miners arrived at the saloon they were amazed to hear no uproar, but the strains of mechanical music being wafted on the evening air. They tip-toed to the door of the saloon and peeped in.

Just then the music stopped again, but O'Neil knew what to do now. He grabbed for the nearest man and turned him upside down in his powerful grip.

The money in the man's pocket rolled to the floor, and the giant ape grabbed a handful of it, trying coin after coin until he found one that fitted the slot.

Then the music began again.

The five men at the door could hardly believe their eyes. The men beside the piano had seen the new arrivals, but dared not shout out or move towards them for fear of enraging the gorilla.

Because of the presence of so many men round the gorilla the sheriff and his four allies could not open fire. The miners had told the sheriff that revolvers were useless against O'Neil, and the lawman had fetched two rifles.

The music rippled on. It was only tinny, untuneful stuff, but the Six-Gun Gorilla thought it was wonderful. He was swaying in time with it.

"It's a sure thing he had nothin' to do with Strawhan gettin' clear," muttered one of the miners huskily. "We ought to be lookin' for Strawhan instead of standin' here."

The sheriff nodded his head in agreement, and hurried after the four miners, who were setting out to scour the neighbourhood for a sign of the missing man.

Meanwhile O'Neil continued to rock to and fro in time with the music. He did not care how long the musical party continued. He was quite happy, nodding his head and beating time with his revolver.

Not a man dared leave his side. They all feared that that would draw his wrath upon them.

Back in the lock-up Strawhan began to notice that the town had become quiet again, and he sat up in his cell. There was no longer any uproar in the streets. Somewhere he could hear the strains of music, but that was the only sound. The panic must have subsided.

Did that mean that O'Neil had gone away? Hardly able to believe that this was possible, Strawhan got up and went to the window of the cell and looked out. The street outside was deserted. There seemed to be no sign of trouble. He rubbed his chin and wondered what he should do.

He felt safer under cover, but still this was a great chance to get away altogether again. From what he had heard since he had been a prisoner he knew full well that he would be hanged after trial. Why be hanged when he might get clean away and outwit both the police and the gorilla?

The rest in the lock-up had calmed his nerves. He felt fit to face danger again, though one glimpse of the gorilla would have thrown him into a panic.

Cautiously the killer unlocked the door of the cell and let himself out. All other doors had been left open. He only had to walk out to be free, but before he went he took something which was hanging on the wall over the sheriff's desk. It was a large, useful-looking revolver. Strawhan was armed again.

In the same desk he found ammunition. It made him feel twice as brave to know that he could now defend himself.

A few minutes later he was outside in the narrow alley at the back of the main street. He meant to avoid the main street, and dodged from cover to cover until he was on the edge of the town.

His sense of smell guided him to a stable where two horses were contentedly eating. He picked the better of the pair, and was soon mounted and riding away in the opposite direction to that taken by Sheriff Lucas and his volunteer posse.

Luck had certainly been with Tutt Strawhan that night, though as he rode he kept his eyes on the shadows, and felt his heart thump every time the wind rustled the bushes.

At the saloon the music suddenly stopped with a clatter. This time it was not because another coin was needed, but because the machine had broken altogether. The long-suffering spring had finally given out.

O'Neil tried his best to push in another coin. It bent in his powerful grip. He roared with anger, and the men in the saloon winced and crouched back in alarm. Now what was going to happen?

But O'Neil intended to do them no harm. After shaking and banging the piano several times, he flew into an even greater passion towards it, and fired his revolver twice into its polished sides.

Then he kicked it and walked away. The concert was over. He had now remembered why he had come to the town.

Out into the road went O'Neil, the rest of the inhabitants of the town hiding behind closed doors as he passed, for by this time his presence had become known to everybody.

Turning his head from side to side, he twitched his wide nostrils. He was trying to pick up the scent of those four miners.

He came opposite the lock-up, and suddenly he stopped. His hair bristled, his mouth opened in a soundless snarl, his eyes gleamed with hate.

He had scented someone even more important to him than the miners. He had caught a whiff of the smell which he associated with Tutt Strawhan!

Licking his thick lips, he turned and crept towards the building. By this time he had learned that it was safer to be cautious when dealing with the man who had killed his master. He made no noise as he approached the lock-up.

The doors were open, and that made things easy for him. Still sniffing the air, he picked his way down the corridor until he came to the two open cells.

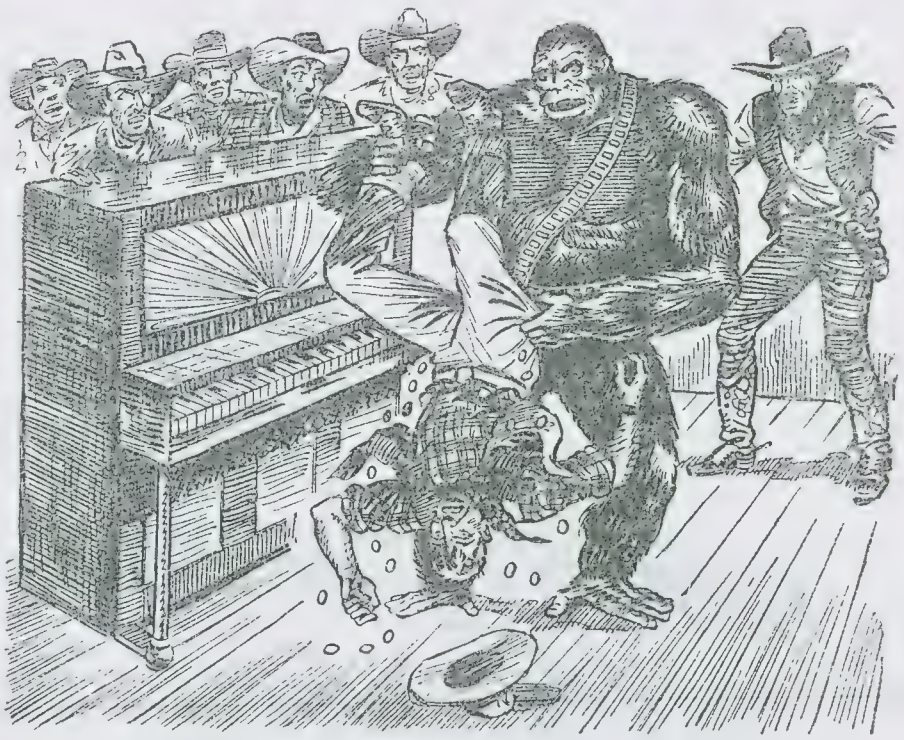
There the smell was strongest, for Strawhan had been there the longest. The Six-Gun Gorilla nosed inside, gun in fist. His lips were drawn back from his teeth in an evil snarl.

He found nothing. The blankets which Strawhan had used to cover himself the gorilla tore to shreds. His rage grew when he realised that his man had again escaped him, and he vented his fury on the lock-up, smashing doors, wrenching out bars, even destroying the furniture.

The noise he made caused the people in their shacks to tremble and crouch closer together. By the time the Six-Gun Gorilla had finished, the lock-up looked as though a cyclone had struck it.

Not until then did he lurch out into the yard at the back, still sniffing the air, still intent on picking up the trail of the man who was at that moment galloping a horse to exhaustion half a dozen miles away.

Tutt Strawhan had made the most of his period of liberty, but if he thought he had seen the last of the Six-Gun Gorilla he was due for a painful surprise.



The mechanical piano had stopped, but O'Neil knew what to do. He turned the nearest onlooker upside down and shook out the coins that were needed to make the piano resume playing!

Next week Tutt Strawhan joins up with a party of pioneers and enlists their aid to fight the Six-Gun Gorilla! Don't miss this thrilling instalment and make sure your "Wizard" contains No. 12 of the great FREE "Battles For The Flag" Cards.

Tutt Strawhan, the worst man in the West, is hailed as a hero !— READ BELOW HOW THIS ASTONISHING CHANGE COMES ABOUT !

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Tutt Strawhan—Hero

THE lone rider was reeling with weariness in the saddle. The horse he rode was on the verge of collapse. He had been goading it cruelly to get it over those last few miles.

Yet even though he was hunched forward with fatigue, and steadying himself with one hand on the pommel of the saddle, he found the energy to turn every few minutes and look behind him.

He must have done that about a hundred times during his ride. At such times his eyes would widen with fear, and he would shiver.

He was a hunted man, fleeing from his pursuer. Even yet he could scarcely believe that he had escaped with his life.

Tutt Strawhan was his name. A price had been on his head for several years, but it was not a sheriff or other officers of the law that he now feared.

He was fleeing from something much more terrible.

Some months earlier, when he had been head of the once-feared Strawhan Gang of Colorado, he had heard of a small gold mine worked by an old miner named Bart Masters.

The mine had been run by Masters for seven years with the aid of a gorilla which he had purchased from a sailor.

Masters had named the beast O'Neil, and it had become his constant companion. The miner had taught the beast to be useful in many ways. He had even taught it to use a revolver, rigging it up in gun-belt and bandolier.

Strawhan and his men had gone to the mine, killed Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and had made off with the gold.

O'Neil had recovered, and his grief and rage were terrible when he had discovered his master was dead. He had set out on the trail of the murderers.

Ever since then he had hounded the Strawhan Gang. One by one he had killed off its evil members, until now only Strawhan remained.

Terrified out of his wits, Tutt Strawhan had finally managed to get away. Now he believed that he had shaken off his terrible pursuer, but he could never be certain. O'Neil could stick closer to a trail than a bloodhound.

Strawhan had been riding west ever since his last escape. He did not know where he was going. He did not care much. His only wish was to get away from the Six-Gun Gorilla.

A good many miles had passed beneath his horse's hooves since he had last seen O'Neil. The desperate man was now heading into uncharted country, beyond the furthest settlements of the pioneers.

He knew that this was dangerous because of the presence of Indians, but he would rather face Redskins than the Six-Gun Gorilla.

Dawn was breaking when at last he stopped and climbed stiffly from his horse beside a stream. His throat was parched with dust. He threw himself down and drank his fill, whilst the horse thrust its muzzle into the same water with a grunt of relief.

All was silent around them. They seemed to have the wilderness to themselves. Tutt Strawhan sighed. He wanted nothing more than to be alone. Behind him he had a lifetime of crime. Now he wanted only peace—and safety.

During his long ride he had crossed three rivers, and he believed that that would put O'Neil off the scent. Ahead were rugged mountains. He intended putting those behind him as another barrier against his pursuer.

But for the moment he was too weary to think of anything but sleep. He tethered his horse, lay down under some bushes, and slept soundly.

It must have been midday when he was roused by unearthly screams and the sound of shots. He rose to his knees in alarm, and parting the bushes, peered down the river bank.

What he saw made his hand flash instinctively to his gun. A party of pioneers must have been following the river with the idea of seeking an easy crossing for their waggons. There were five of the big prairie-waggons, each heavily laden and drawn by mules. About eight men in all rode with these waggons, and they were firing desperately at a horde of Redskins who had risen from the rushes of the river.

It was a surprise attack. The Indians were between Tutt Strawhan and the waggons. There were twenty or thirty of them, and they were firing arrows as they rushed forward. The waggons were being hurriedly pulled round to form a crude square. There were women and children in them, the families of the pioneers.

Strawhan saw all this in a matter of seconds. His jaw muscles tightened when he saw two of the pioneers fall from their saddles. The Indians were suffering losses, too, but it seemed that by sheer force of numbers they would sweep through the waggon train and massacre every person there.

Tutt Strawhan had no sort of feeling for those pioneers. He did not care if they were massacred or not, but it suddenly occurred to him that if the Redskins were as warlike as this he would have little chance of living in the country alone.

It would be much better for him to get in touch with some people who knew nothing of his past.

No sooner did he decide to do this than he snatched out his revolver, levelled it, and began to fire from behind the Redskins.

In his time he had been accounted one of the best marksmen in the West. Five Redskins fell to his first six bullets, and panic seized the rest. This unexpected attack from the rear was too much for them. They had planned an ambush for the white men. Now they thought that the white men were ambushing them.

They hesitated, the waggons were pulled into formation, and the remaining pioneers poured in a volley. By that time Strawhan had reloaded, and fired again and again.

The cowardly Apaches could stand no more. They turned and splashed across the river, leaving a dozen of their number dead and dying.

The pioneers stood staring towards the

bushes where the cartridge smoke still hung. They were amazed by this astonishing escape. One moment they had expected certain death, and the next their enemies had been driven away.

Tutt Strawhan rose and lumbered forward. There was a smile on his evil face as he called:

"Hullo, strangers! How-do?"

The pioneers crowded round him, slapped him on the back, thanked him for his courageous rescue, and congratulated him on his wonderful shooting.

The gunman shrugged his shoulders modestly.

"That's nothing, I guess," he said. "White men have got to stick together in a new country. I just happened to come along in time, that's all. Ted Sinclair's my name, an' I'm a prospector. Where are you bound for?"

Terror gripped Tutt Strawhan as he saw the marks in the mud. The Six-Gun Gorilla was still on the vengeance trail!

The pioneers explained that they were looking for homestead land suitable for cattle raising. Their leader was a tough old-timer named Corrigan, and he gripped Strawhan by the arm and said:

"You can't go wandering round this country on your own. Why not join with us, Sinclair? We'll be mighty glad to have you along with us. The more men we have who can shoot straight, the more likely we are to get through. What about it?"

Tutt Strawhan thought of that relentless gorilla somewhere on his trail, thought of the impossibility of keeping awake all the time, and nodded.

"Sure, I'd be glad to hang around with you for a while," he said.

So he helped the pioneers bury their dead, and settled in as one of the party. With these good-hearted, rugged pioneers around him he believed he would be safe for some time. Furthermore, men of this type usually had a little nest-egg of money stored away somewhere. Maybe he could find out where that was, lift it, and clear out with well-lined pockets when the time was ripe.

All these things prompted him to join the pioneers, and they on their part were grateful and pleased. They had not the slightest idea that he was one of the worst characters in the West, a murderer, bandit, a criminal with a reward of five thousand dollars on his head. They looked on him as a fine fellow, and made much of him.

For two days they travelled into the wilderness, watching day and night for Redskins. Soon they came to a pleasant valley where they decided to rest for a while and feed up their stock, which had got painfully thin.

No one could have stuck more closely to the waggons, or have worked harder, than the so-called Sinclair. He never went out of sight of the others, and if he seemed extra watchful, sometimes climbing hillocks in order to study the countryside, the pioneers put this down to his desire to be sure that no Redskins were about.

The real cause of this, of course, was that he was wondering whether O'Neil had yet picked up his trail. It seemed hardly possible that the gorilla could ever find his whereabouts again, but O'Neil was something entirely out of the ordinary. There was no knowing when he might turn up.

The waggons were formed in a square beside a stream. Defences were raised in case the Apaches made another attack, but scouts reported they could see no traces of Indians in the district.

They were wrong. There were Redskins in plenty, hidden in a deep gulch nearby, more than a hundred of them. To these had returned the survivors of that first unsuccessful attack, with stories of the loot to be collected if they could only rush these waggons.

An attack was prepared.

It was too early in the month for a moon, and the nights were dark, especially when low-lying clouds blotted out the stars. The Redskins planned to launch an assault that night.

As soon as darkness shrouded the sides of the valley the Redskins crept down the slopes. They came silently, like shadows. Not a rustle betrayed their movements.

They completely surrounded the camp, lay down in the grass and waited.

The camp-fires of the pioneers showed up brightly. The women and children were in the waggons, preparing for bed. The men sat or stood around the fires, smoking their pipes, and swapping yarns.

The Redskins watched through narrowed eyes. They knew that only half of the party of white men would be on guard once the camp settled down for the night. The other half would roll themselves in their blankets. The Indians waited for that time.

The pioneers finally prepared for sleep. Five men only remained alert, and even they could not see the hundred sprawled figures in the grass outside the camp.

Time passed. Not a sound gave warning of the presence of the Redskins, but word passed from one to the other that the moment had come. Arrows were fitted to bows. At a given signal they would pour in a volley of arrows, and follow it up with a mad rush with their tomahawks.

The chieftain had been kneeling behind some high clumps of grass. He had not stirred for an hour. Suddenly he rose and opened his mouth to give the warning shout that would start the massacre.

Then suddenly there came a long, deep growl from behind him, and a revolver cracked.

The chieftain doubled up with a scream, and fell forward on his face.

Panic seized the Redskins who had been about to spring to their feet. A hundred heads turned at once, whilst in the camp of the pioneers warning shouts brought every able-bodied man rushing to his post.

The Mystery Rescuer

THE Redskins saw a monstrous shape rise from the grass. The sight of it froze the blood in their veins.

It was well over six feet in height, with a huge barrel-like chest, covered with thick, shaggy hair, and with a face like a nightmare. Around its waist was a revolver belt, and a dangling holster. Over one shoulder hung a bandolier containing cartridges.

Never in their wildest dreams had the Redskins imagined any such creature. They did not know whether it was man or beast. They only knew that it was an enemy, and that it had killed their chief with one of the Paleface fire-sticks.

Was it a white man? Was it some terrible ally which these pioneers had fetched from somewhere to keep watch through the night? These ideas flashed through their minds as the Six-Gun Gorilla waddled forward.

Truth to tell, the Six-Gun Gorilla had been as scared as they were. He had known nothing of the presence of the Redskins in the grass when he had first crawled towards the camp, for the wind had carried their scent away from it.

Having trailed Strawhan across miles of country, he had at last sighted the pioneers' camp, and had settled down in the grass to watch the men round the camp-fires.

The sudden appearance of the Apache chieftain when he had leaped to his feet had startled the gorilla into snatching its revolver and firing that shot. Even then it was bewildered by the appearance of those other Redskins on all sides.

It stood there waving the gun in its hairy fist, uncertain whether to fire or not.

In the waggon camp the pioneers could see nothing of the gorilla, but someone gave the order for a volley to be fired, and leaden bullets shrieked out in all directions.

The Redskins continued to stare at the awful apparition which had seemingly come

beings about, perhaps behind them.

The idea was too much for them. With howls of fear they fled up the side of the valley and vanished into the night. The pioneers fired one more volley, then ceased.

O'Neil crouched low. He was bewildered by what had happened. A hundred Indians had appeared from the ground as if by magic, and he was scared. He backed away to some bushes and lay down, licking his thick lips and snarling softly.

In the camp, men were baffled and astounded. That a Redskin attack had been checked by that one mysterious shot was evident to them all, but who had fired the shot?

A hurried roll call was made by Corrigan, and it was discovered that every man was present in the camp. No one had been out there to fire a shot. No one could explain it.

The pioneers were both delighted and frightened. Corrigan went to the edge of the camp and shouted in the direction whence the shot had come:

"Hullo, there, hullo!" he roared. "Who fired that shot? We're mighty grateful to you, whoever you are!"

There was no reply. The pioneers shouted again and again, with the same lack of results. The single shot that routed the Redskins remained a mystery.

Some of the pioneers wished to go out and search the grass in case their unknown friend should have been struck down by the fleeing Redskins. Wiser heads advised caution. It would be time enough for that when dawn came.

So they remained at their posts all night, staring into the darkness, ready for anything, and all the time expecting a challenge from up the valley.

Morning found them eager to go out and find some explanation for the mystery.

Nearly all the men went together, and it was not long before they found the dead Indian chief, face down, with a hole in his back. Corrigan looked at the bullet hole grimly.

"A heavy .45 did this," he muttered. "Someone knew just where to catch him. Reckon the bullet came from over there. Let's have a look behind those bushes. We might find tracks."

Tutt Strawhan was with them. He was rather tight-lipped as they searched around, and suddenly one of the younger men cried:

"I've found tracks, but what—what made 'em? Hey, look at this—an' this——!"

He pointed to the ground, which happened to be soft there, and the pioneers pursed their lips with amazement. Huge, queer imprints of a bare foot showed clearly. They were something like the tracks made by a native, yet there was something not quite human about them. The toes were broader and more screwed up.

"What the heck——?" grunted Corrigan, then heard a sobbing gasp behind him.

He turned, in time to see Tutt Strawhan clutching at his revolver, his eyes wild with fear, his face as white as a sheet. The pioneers had never seen such terror on a man's face before. It was ghastly.

Someone grabbed him, but he shook off the man savagely.

"It's around here! It—it must be!" he croaked.

"What's around here?" asked Corrigan. "What do you know about it, Sinclair? Do you recognise these tracks?"

Tutt Strawhan swallowed hastily. There were two choices open to him, to deny all knowledge of the gorilla, in which case the pioneers might be taken off their guard, or to make up some lying tale. He decided to do the latter.

"Yes, I guess I do," he said. "It's a gorilla—a—a circus gorilla. When I left Denver I heard about it. Folks said that a huge gorilla, stronger than ten men, an' armed with a revolver, had escaped from a I saw one of 'em once after the brute had finished with 'em. Guess that's why I was shaken up! We'd better get on its trail an' settle it once an' for all. Otherwise we'll be sorry."

He was trying to speak bravely, though his pulses raced madly. He was trying to keep his nerve in front of his new comrades. He remembered what had happened when he had lost his nerve once before.

Corrigan squared his shoulders.

"Well, if that's the case, I reckon we'd best take your advice," he growled, "but it does seem a pity to kill an animal that saved our scalps for us! Maybe we could tame it an' save its life."

Strawhan nearly screeched with fear. The idea of anyone trying to tame the Six-Gun Gorilla appalled him. Sweat showed on his face.

"No, no, we can't do that!" he protested. "It's a killer. Some old fool taught it to use a gun, an' it fires at anything it sees. It's dangerous. Now it's come up with us it'll follow us until we kill it."

"Guess he's right," murmured someone, and to the gunman's relief the pioneers agreed to hunt down O'Neil and finish him.

They all had good rifles, the same ones they had used against the Redskins, and Tutt Strawhan gained courage from the fact. He had proved that revolver bullets had little effect on the massive gorilla, but even its tough hide would not keep out heavy bullets from express rifles. They ought to be able to riddle it.

They started to follow the tracks on the ground, but soon came to harder soil where no imprints showed. From what they could see the beast had crossed the river.

They also intended crossing that river when they moved on. It was not pleasant to think of the mighty creature waiting for them to stage a hold-up.

As they hunted, Strawhan told the pioneers hideous tales of the gorilla's savagery. He made it out to be the most awful creature in the world, and gave no hint that O'Neil was pursuing him because of the cold-blooded way in which he had murdered Bart Masters.

He made his listeners' blood curdle with his stories. They became more than ever determined to hunt down O'Neil.

Up and down the river bank they hunted for more footprints, but found none.

If they had only known it, O'Neil was not very far away, hidden in a tree which overhung the water. There he had retreated at dawn, in order to watch the camp where he believed Strawhan to be.

O'Neil had been there when the searchers had come out accompanied by Tutt Strawhan, and the huge creature's eyes had flashed murderously when he had seen the man he sought.

A few months earlier O'Neil would have hurled himself recklessly from the tree and would have snatched Strawhan up at once, regardless of the presence of the other men. Now he knew better. He had learned a good deal about white men since he had started on the trail of vengeance.

He had learned that those long, stick-like things that they carried in their hands were deadly. They were even more deadly than his prized revolver.

It was wise to keep away from other white men as much as possible, and to wait until he could get Tutt Strawhan on his own. Now he had made up with him again he did not intend to let him out of his sight.

So the Six-Gun Gorilla remained where he was, motionless, watching every move of O'Neil realised that this was not the time to use the weapon.

The searchers passed to and fro up the river bank. They even crossed to the other side, but not a footprint of the gorilla did they find.

In the end they had to admit that they were baffled, and returned to the camp, where anxious-eyed women waited to hear the result of their search.

No one was more anxious than Tutt Strawhan. Once again fear had gripped him. His lips were twitching, and his hand was continuously on his gun. He urged the leader of the pioneers to leave this valley as soon as possible.

Corrigan was reluctant to do that. Now he knew that there were Redskins about in large numbers, he preferred to remain in a place which he could defend. Further up the valley the waggons would have to pass beneath some high cliffs which would make an admirable hiding-place for the Redskins if they wished to stage another ambush.

Corrigan did not like the idea of risking such an attack.

"Jimmy the Dodger"
IS COMING NEXT WEEK!

The Scalp that Couldn't Be Taken

ONE of the Six-Gun Gorilla's chief troubles in life was the matter of food. A huge creature such as he was, weighing fully six hundred pounds, needed a great deal of food of a special kind.

He was a vegetarian, and lived on wild fruits or tender shoots of plants. It meant spending several hours each day to search for his meals.

So it was hunger that finally brought him down from the tree beside the stream, and caused him to wade across between the high banks which screened him from view.

He still feared those rifles of the pioneers. He had decided to wait till darkness shrouded his movements, and then try to get Strawhan. Meanwhile he would look for food.

Up the valley he wandered, picking a tender shoot here, breaking off a succulent twig there. These only served as appetisers, and increased his hunger. He showed his teeth angrily when he found no wild fruits. They were not plentiful, as they were in his native jungle.

At last he came to the foot of the cliffs, and looked upwards. Bushes grew on the sheer slopes, and on these bushes were red berries.

The cliff would have been considered impossible to climb by a man, but to the Six-Gun Gorilla it was easy. He reached up an exceptionally long arm, gripped a narrow ledge with his fingers, and hauled himself clear of the ground.

Up and up he went, finding toe and foot-holds where no man could have found them. The gun swung against his thigh, and the bandolier sometimes got about his neck and threatened to choke him. But he was used to that. He merely snarled and continued on his way until he came to the first of the bushes.

There he squatted and plucked the berries. They were good to eat. He decided to devour all he could get.

Higher and higher he went, from bush to bush, and at each stopping place he ate several pounds of berries. It was the best feed O'Neil had had for a long time.

Now he was nearing the top of the cliff, and what he did not know was that fifty or sixty Redskins were lying there watching him.

They had been there ever since they had fled from the lower part of the valley. They had been watching the white men and trying to find out more about this huge, hairy ally who had routed them the previous night.

When they had seen this strange figure

coming up the cliff their first impulse had been to flee, but more courageous members of the party had seen that here was a good chance of destroying the Palefaces' friend.

"As he comes over the top of the cliff his hands will not be free," they whispered. "We can strike him on the head with our tomahawks. He will fall to the bottom and we can take his scalp."

The idea of taking such an unusual scalp appealed to them. Each of the young warriors there and then decided that he would be the one to have this honour.

Grunting and panting, O'Neil neared the top of the cliff. He had eaten a lot, and he was rather breathless. He planned to rest up there and sleep off some of the meal.

One powerful hand gripped the edge of the cliff, the other ranged up beside it, and the Six-Gun Gorilla's head came above the ground level.

There was a mad rush towards him. A score of Redskins had been waiting for that moment. They fell over each other in their eagerness to be the one to land the fatal blow. Six or seven tomahawks landed at once on the massive skull of the gorilla, and with a snarl of fury and pain he lost his hold.

Backwards he went, head over heels. Once he struck a patch of projecting bushes, and tried to grasp them with his hands, but they were pulled out of the ground, and the Six-Gun Gorilla continued his fall.

He landed on his back at the foot of the cliff and lay still. The Redskins peered down from above, and whooped their joy.

Then came the mad rush to descend for the scalp. Braves fought each other as they raced for the narrow path which they knew of the right. Two of them fell to death in the scramble.

One young fellow, with gleaming scalping-knife held in readiness, got a yard or so ahead of the others. He raced down the twisting pathway with half a dozen of his comrades close behind him.

It was he who was the first to kneel on the massive chest of O'Neil, and grasp the shaggy head by a tuft of hair at the top.

To scalp O'Neil was a very different proposition to scalping a white man. That flat-topped head was so huge, and the hair so thick, that the young Redskin scarcely knew where to begin.

He delayed so long that his comrades arrived, and hurled him aside. They fought over the limp form of O'Neil, trampling on him, falling over his hairy legs, stepping on his face.

Finally a young chieftain claimed the honour, and the others stood back sullenly as he knelt to do the gruesome task. He caught hold of one of O'Neil's ears to twist the head to one side, and inserted the point of the knife through the hair.

The next second there was a terrific roar which echoed along the cliff in both directions, and O'Neil heaved clear of the ground. The young chieftain was hurled a dozen yards, and landed with such force that his neck was broken.

That fall from the cliff would have killed any man, but it had not killed the Six-Gun Gorilla. It had merely stunned him, and the prick from the knife had brought him back to consciousness with a rush.

Mad with rage, infuriated by the sight of these red-skinned men around him, O'Neil clinched a furious attack.

His revolver remained in its holster. He did not use it. His great hands and his mighty strength were the only weapons he needed.

With both arms he swept a bunch of Redskins together, crushed them until their bones cracked, then hurled them against the cliff.

One of the braves had leaped on to O'Neil's back to try and tomahawk him, but he was clutched in a gigantic hand and thrown into the midst of a group of others, bowling them over like ninepins.

For five minutes this fight went on. Nothing could be seen of the gorilla except an occasional hairy arm. It was almost buried in Redskins. Their screams and howls were terrible to hear.

At first the Redskins had tried to fight back at him, confident in their numbers and in the knowledge that he could not use his firestick, but when they sampled his incredible strength and his ferocity, they decided to get away.

Many of them fled along the foot of the cliff, a few tried to climb, but found it impossible. Others were even more unlucky, and were caught in the gorilla's huge arms. Their fate was quick and painful.

In the end O'Neil was left there amidst a pile of maimed and dead Redskins, blood trickling from the cuts on his head, his huge chest heaving as he panted for breath. He had won the battle. Twenty Indians had been slain, and the rest had fled for their lives.

O'Neil was content. He started to move away, heard a sound above him, and turned his head.

One Redskin remained hanging from the cliff, about forty feet up. He could go no further, and dared not come down.

The Six-Gun Gorilla reached for his gun. Gripping it in his clumsy fingers, he found the trigger. With him, shooting was the simple matter of pointing and pulling the trigger. He rarely took aim.

At short distances this was usually effective, as it was now. Crack! The Redskin gave a howl, and dropped to his death. O'Neil snarled with satisfaction, blew down the barrel of the smoking gun, and put it away. He was always pleased when he hit anything with the gun.

The first the pioneers and Strawhan knew of the fight up the valley was when that shot rang out. It came faintly but unmistakably from the distance, and in a moment the whole camp was jabbering with excitement.

They knew that it must be their mysterious rescuer of the previous night—the Six-Gun Gorilla. Tutt Strawhan turned pale, and wondered whether he could hide inside a waggon.

The pioneers were men of great courage. One of them named Thoms, slapped him on the back.

"Come along, Sinclair. We'll get him this time," he said. "It's a durn good thing you'd heard about him, or we might have taken him for a friend."

Strawhan shuddered. He could think of no more terrible friend than the Six-Gun Gorilla.

He could not well refuse. A few minutes later he was crossing the river with the other pioneers, and straining his eyes anxiously for a glimpse of O'Neil.

But O'Neil was not to be seen. He had seen the searchers and had crouched to the ground.

He knew that they were after him, and he blamed it all on Strawhan. Men had never hunted him like this before.

His lips parted in a soundless snarl. Daylight had only an hour to go. It would then be dark, and he wanted to be very close to Tutt Strawhan when darkness closed down.

He knew that the men would return to the waggon camp after they had finished their hunt. That gave him an idea.

With the stealth and cunning of the wild beast he was, he passed through the cordon of men who advanced up the valley. Once he was tempted to fire a shot at Strawhan, who stood only thirty yards from him, but he restrained the impulse. He wanted to get his hairy hands on the killer of his master.

Gradually he reached the lower end of the valley, and studied the camp. The women and children were crowded on to the river bank to watch their men folk in the distance. Two men had remained behind to protect them. The mules were grazing peacefully in an enclosure which had been made from thorn bushes.

The waggons were for the moment deserted, and O'Neil had another brain-wave. He had seen people going in and out of those houses on wheels.

Crawling through the long grass with a skill which any Redskin would have envied, he came to the wheels of a waggon. There he crouched and waited.

Nobody was looking in his direction. Tutt Strawhan, in his nervousness, had fired a shot at a shadow, mistaking it for the gorilla. Every eye was turned to him. O'Neil's movements were unnoticed by anyone.

One hairy hand grasped the tail-end of a waggon, and the next moment the six-hundred-pound gorilla had made the vehicle creak as it stepped inside.

The waggon contained boxes of stores and sacks of potatoes. The Six-Gun Gorilla squeezed himself down in the remotest corner and waited.

When Tutt Strawhan came back O'Neil would be ready for him!

Next week O'Neil is captured by the Redskins and sentenced to death at the torture stake! Don't miss this thrill-a-minute instalment, and remember, "The Advance of The Sherwood Foresters at Salamanca" is FREE!

REGIMENTAL MASCOTS

The Ram of The Sherwood Foresters.

DURING the Indian Mutiny of 1858, when The Sherwood Foresters were attacking a place called Kotah, the commanding officer saw a fine ram tied up in the compound of an Indian temple.

He asked one of the soldiers if he could capture it, to which the man replied that he thought he could.

Away went the soldier, dropping over the walls and dodging fire from the Indian rebels. He reached the ram, who was pleased to see him, for he was very hungry. The soldier brought him safely back to the regiment, where he was given plenty of good food. He soon smartened up in appearance and became the regimental mascot.

He served right through the Indian Mutiny in the course of which he marched over 3000 miles and took part in six battles. For his services he was presented with the Indian Medal, which now hangs in the officers' mess. His successors wear a duplicate of it.

(World Copyright Reserved.)

Learn more about The Sherwood Foresters by getting next week's FREE Battle Card. It is.

THE NOTTS AND DERBY REGIMENT.

The Advance of The Sherwood Foresters at Salamanca.

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

Menace in the Waggon

THE waggons had been drawn up in a rough square for defensive purposes, and at the moment they seemed to be deserted. The women and children who usually travelled in them were crowded on the nearby river bank to watch the men in the distance.

These men were pioneers, and they had crossed the river on a hunting expedition. They were spread out in line as they picked their way over the rough ground. Each man carried his rifle or revolver at the ready. They seemed to be expecting trouble.

Amongst them there was one fellow who hung back nervously whenever he had the chance. His heart was not in the hunt. He would have turned and hidden in the waggons if he had dared show fear before the pioneers.

Tutt Strawhan was his name, though he was known to these pioneers as Sinclair. Until recently he had been head of a much-feared gang of outlaws in Colorado. A price had been on his head for several years.

Some months earlier, when his gang had still been in existence, he had heard of a small gold-mine run by an old miner named Bart Masters.

Masters had run the mine for seven years with the aid of a gorilla which he had called O'Neil, after the man from whom he had bought it.

The gorilla had become his constant companion. The miner had taught the great beast to be useful in many ways. He had even taught it to use a revolver, rigging it up in gun-belt and bandolier.

Strawhan and his men had gone to the mine, killed Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and made off with the gold.

When O'Neil had recovered, and found his master dead, he had taken the gun and cartridge bandolier and had set out on the trail of the murderers.

He had killed off the gang one by one, until now only Strawhan remained.

Terrified, Tutt Strawhan had finally managed to get away to the West, and had joined this party of pioneers in Indian country. At first he had believed that he had at last dodged his terrible pursuer, but now he knew differently.

O'Neil had turned up outside the camp, and had driven off some Redskins who had been about to attack the waggons. Strawhan had learned to his horror that his pursuer was still after him.

Cunningly, the killer had told his new companions that the gorilla was a mad brute which had escaped from a circus in Denver, and that it was dangerous to all human beings. He had begged them to help him hunt it down and kill it. Only if O'Neil was dead could Tutt Strawhan live in peace.

So now the pioneers were hunting the gorilla, while the women and children watched from a distance.

But there was yet another pair of eyes that watched the hunters—the eyes of the Six-Gun Gorilla! O'Neil had slipped past the men who were hunting him and was already in the camp.

A few weeks earlier he would have leapt at Strawhan on sight, but now he was more wary.

Instead, he had hidden himself in one of the big waggons, behind some boxes and bales. There he was awaiting the return of Tutt Strawhan.

O'Neil was quite content to bide his time. It was comfortable down there in that corner, with sacks of potatoes against his back. He lay at his ease, and kept one eye to a crack in the side of the waggon.

The Six-Gun Gorilla was tired, however. The comfort and warmth made him feel drowsy. A few minutes later he gave a grunt and fell fast asleep.

Time passed, and the hunters reached the foot of a cliff where they found many dead and mangled Redskins. They stared in awe at the sight. Evidently there had been a terrific battle between a party of Redskins and the Six-Gun Gorilla. The gorilla had won easily.

It was terrifying to think of its strength. Corrigan, the big leader of the party of pioneers, shrugged his shoulders.

"I guess the best thing we can do is to leave this brute alone and clear out of the district. At least he's got rid of those Injuns for us. The way seems clear. I vote we get on our way and keep our eyes open."

Still very much on their guard, the hunters retraced their steps and recrossed the river. Their families met them with questioning looks, but Corrigan was not the sort to explain himself to womenfolk.

"We're pushing on and getting clear of that valley before dark," he said. "Drive in the beasts."

The mules had been hobbled nearby. They were driven in and harnessed to the waggons at top speed. The men had done this sort of thing so often that no time was wasted, and before long the waggons were on the move, mounted men riding on either side.

It was the lurching and bumping of the waggon which first aroused the Six-Gun Gorilla. His lips drew back in a silent snarl, and he stuck his head forward to see what was happening.

He saw the back of a man who sat on the driving seat of the waggon with a long whip in his hand. He saw the team of mules in front. The gorilla was both frightened and bewildered.

Rearing up to half his height, and balancing himself by touching his hands to the floor of the waggon, O'Neil looked along the line of waggons. He could see Strawhan riding a horse on the left flank and his eyes flamed red at the sight.

His hand went to the six-gun which hung in its holster, but he did not draw the weapon. The time had not yet come.

The waggons bumped and jolted over the stony ground. The one in which O'Neil rode was so heavily laden with stores that no one but the driver was allowed to travel in it. For that reason O'Neil remained unnoticed.

His first impulse was to climb out the back and escape, but that would mean letting his enemy out of his sight. He must remain

where he was until Strawhan came nearer.

So he remained silent, and watched the train of waggons cross the river, which was no easy task, for there was no proper ford.

With much shouting and lashing of whips, the pioneers finally reached the other side. The wide valley lay before them.

Skirting the foot of the cliff where the Six-Gun Gorilla had battled with the Redskins, the pioneers headed for the more open country beyond.

Many times they glanced around them, wondering if they would see the huge shape of the gorilla in the rear. Tutt Strawhan could not keep still. His head was continually darting from side to side.

Not once did Strawhan come back close to the waggons. The hidden gorilla kept its eyes on the man and waited.

The pioneers must have been about five miles from the river when, without warning, a hail of arrows hissed from some bushes, striking down two of the men and wounding some of the mules.

Once again the pioneers had run into Redskins!

In a moment Corrigan had bellowed orders, men were swinging the waggons inwards to form a square, and the outriders were galloping in to take part in the defence.

Rifles cracked, revolvers spat, but there was one waggon which did not come round in line. That was the waggon in which the Six-Gun Gorilla was hidden.

As ill-luck would have it, one of the Redskins' arrows had torn a groove in the neck of the lead mule. Maddened by pain and squealing terribly, the mule had bolted. The rest of the team likewise took to their heels.

The terrified driver stood up and heaved back on the reins, shouting for them to stop. He knew full well that if he was separated from his companions he would be caught by the Redskins and killed.

"Whoa! Pull up, you brutes! Whoa!" he roared.

The team of mules took no notice. They were galloping at full tilt in a blind panic. His heaving had not the slightest effect. They were going straight up the valley, and already a dozen Redskins had started in pursuit, seeing easy prey.

O'Neil had been thrown on his back amongst the potato sacks by the sudden jerk forward. Quickly he turned over and scrambled forward.

The exhausted driver's hands were slipping from the reins with the strain of his efforts, when over his shoulders came two long, hairy arms. Two huge hands gripped the reins alongside his own.

The driver's eyes bulged and his heart missed a beat. There was hot breath on his neck and he could hear a low, growling noise.

O'Neil was taking a hand!

So startled was the driver that he forgot to let go the reins. He felt them being pulled with terrific force. He felt a colossal strength being added to his own. O'Neil had the strength of ten men when he was roused, and now he put out all he had.

The mules were surprised to find the bits dragged back in their jaws with such power. They began to pull up.

O'Neil increased his pull, and with a final jerk the waggon came to a halt, only a quarter of a mile from the others. The driver looked round to see who had brought him such timely aid, found himself gazing into the hideous face of the Six-Gun Gorilla, and promptly fainted.

The gorilla brushed his limp form to one side and looked around.

Behind, not a couple of hundred yards away, a score of Redskins were rushing to the attack.

"King of the Palefaces"

AGAIN O'Neil bared his teeth. He hated the red men. He recognised them as enemies, and he did what he had been trained to do. He drew his six-shooter.

Resting it on the side of the waggon, he took careful aim and fired. The leading Indian fell, and the rest spread out to attack from the other side.

O'Neil fired another five shots, then the hammer of the gun clicked down harmlessly and he knew that the weapon was empty. He thrust the smoking gun back into its holster and tensed himself for a spring.

On came the Indians, little guessing what was awaiting them.

Back at the other waggons, a fierce fight was taking place. The pioneers had got their waggons drawn up so quickly that the Indians had no time to take them unawares. Concentrated fire drove the Redskins back again and again, leaving the ground littered with their dead.

It was the same old story, a few well-armed white men against a horde of ignorant savages. After a few attempts at battering a way through, the Redskins withdrew to the bushes, growling and snarling at their failure.

For the first time, Corrigan and his men had time to look at their fifth waggon, which they now saw to be in a desperate plight. It had come to a halt, and the Redskins were almost on it. No more shots came from the vehicle.

"Why doesn't he keep on firing? Is his gun jammed? What's the matter with him?" gasped the pioneer leader.

The Indians came on, yelling with delight. They had seen only one figure in the waggon, and they were already arguing as to who should have his scalp.

Then, as they reached the tailboard of the waggon, the canvas screen suddenly burst aside, and O'Neil appeared.

With a savage roar of fury, he made a lightning leap and landed amongst the onrushing Redskins.

Two of them were at once snatched in his grasp, and their heads cracked together as though they were eggshells. Their bodies were hurled at two other attackers, and then O'Neil made another grab.

Corrigan and his men were speechless with surprise. To them it seemed as if O'Neil had dropped from the sky. Tutt Strawhan gave a groan and dodged inside a waggon.

In three minutes, O'Neil had killed seven men, and a few spear thrusts, which the Redskins had managed to inflict on him, did not seem to have the slightest effect on him. Finally, the remaining Redskins fled for cover, followed by the angry gorilla.

The mules belonging to that marooned waggon stood there as if hypnotised, until their rightful driver recovered his senses, grabbed the reins, and drove them back to the others.

There he told of those mighty arms which had come over his shoulders and lent him strength.

Weird and terrible cries came from the woods into which O'Neil had chased the Indians. His blood was up, and few things are as terrible as an angry gorilla.

The pioneers waited about half an hour to make sure that it would be safe for them to proceed, then they drove on as fast as possible.

Tutt Strawhan did not make his appearance for the next hour. He lay in one of the waggons like a man paralysed. Luckily for him, no one else noticed his plight.

Long after darkness fell, the waggons continued on their way. Corrigan wanted to get clear of the district where these amazing things had happened.

In the woods, O'Neil relentlessly hunted down the last Redskin and killed him. Then he leaned against a tree to recover his breath.

His frenzy wore off, he became calmer, and remembered that his revolver was empty. He seated himself under the tree to reload, a slow and clumsy business with his thick fingers.

As he did this, he was reminded of the beloved master who had taught him how to do such things, and of the scoundrel who had killed him. His teeth bared once more, and he lurched to his feet with new resolve. He would continue the hunt and treat Strawhan as he had treated those Indians!

Bursting out of the woods, he soon came upon the trail left by the waggons, and followed them swiftly.

But the Six-Gun Gorilla had reckoned without the vengefulness of the Indians. They had not all been killed. Ten of them had survived, having climbed into tall trees to hide themselves.

They held a rapid conference. This was the third time in recent days that this hairy monster had upset their plans. It was time they made an end of him.

Previously, they had not known whether O'Neil was man or demon. Now, however, they were convinced that he was human, that he was some peculiar kind of ally whom the Palefaces employed to protect them.

Whilst seven of them trailed along behind the gorilla, the three others raced to the hills to take the news to those of the tribe who were in camp, and to get them to turn out in force.

They used many short cuts, and within a short time they had reached the camp. Fifteen minutes later, accompanied by two hundred of their tribesmen, they set out on the trail of the Six-Gun Gorilla.

They could have attacked the waggons, but did not choose to do so. They preferred to wait until O'Neil came along the trail.

The gorilla was hot on the scent of Strawhan. It was now no more than half a mile behind the waggons, and had no thought for anything else. O'Neil did not see the ambush awaiting him.

The Redskins could have riddled him with arrows, but they did not want to kill him so quickly. They had other and more sinister plans. They wanted to take O'Neil alive.

A hundred of them waited on either side of the trail, and, when the gorilla came along, nearly as many noosed ropes flew through the air.

At least a dozen of them caught over O'Neil's head and settled around his thick neck on his shoulders. He was jerked to a standstill, and before he could utter one roar of fury the two hundred Redskins rushed.

The Six-Gun Gorilla fought like a fiend, but he was impeded by the ropes that pulled his arms to his sides. These prevented him from drawing his gun.

Some of the ropes he quickly snapped, but before he could free himself from all of them the Redskins had rained blows upon his head. They used heavy tomahawks, the shafts of their spears, and big stones.

Blow after blow the Redskins rained on O'Neil, but it was a long time before he was struck to the ground. Even then his hairy body heaved and twisted as he lay there.

A score of ropes were used to bind him, and in the end the Indians performed a war-dance around their captive.

"Truly he is a strange colour for a Paleface, but he must be one of them or he would never have fought for them," they said. "He must be the strongest Paleface living and he is our prisoner. Long will he last at the torture stake!"

A tree was cut down and passed like a thick pole between O'Neil's bound arms and legs. Twenty men hoisted him from the ground, and for once in his life O'Neil was helpless. Someone had taken charge of his gun-belt and his bandolier.

The whole procession then turned and headed in triumph for the hills.

A mile away, the pioneers and Strawhan made camp on a hilly slope where they believed they could beat off any surprise attack that might come. They knew nothing of the plight of O'Neil.

The Six-Gun Gorilla knew nothing of this himself until he recovered his senses, to find himself trussed in such a painful position.

Then he began to struggle, until his efforts to escape made the men who carried him stagger and stumble. Their comrades hit him blow after blow, bidding him be quiet.

"You are helpless, Paleface!" they jeered. "Even your strength is as nothing now,

Nothing can save you. Before long the women and children will laugh at your antics as you writhe in pain. It will take many hours for you to die. First of all we will take off those hairy clothes which you have so cunningly sewn on you."

Naturally enough, O'Neil did not know what they were saying. He roared and snarled worse than ever, and the Redskins thought that he was using the tongue of the Palefaces, and jeered more than before.

So it was a noisy procession which laboriously made its way into the hills. The gorilla weighed six hundred pounds, and the Redskins had to change over every mile or so.

Word had gone ahead of their triumph, and the rest of the tribe came running to meet them, torches in their hands, all shouting with glee when they saw the huge captive.

"He must be the King of the Palefaces!" said one of the Indians, and the idea caught on.

O'Neil was called the King of the Palefaces, and the entire tribe danced round him as he was carried into the Redskin camp.

There he was dumped down before the tepee of the old chief, who listened to a recital of the injuries which O'Neil had inflicted on his warriors.

The chief's lined face grew stern.

"The Paleface shall die a thousand deaths in one!" he said. "Take him to the torture stake, and, when dawn comes, we will start to kill him. His death will be a lingering one. He shall not die before another dawn comes, nor yet another dawn."

With whoops of delight, the warriors rushed to get a stake strong enough to hold O'Neil. They drove it deep into the ground, and the united efforts of thirty men were needed to lift the infuriated gorilla and tie him to this in an upright position.

O'Neil suddenly became quiet and docile. His recent struggle had exhausted him. He was waiting until he had recovered his strength.

There was no sleep in the Indian village that night. Everyone was kept awake to await the dawn, when the Feast of Torture would begin, and when they would show the King of the Palefaces what happened to prisoners who fell into their hands.

The Limping Pursuer

DAWN came at last and a mighty cheer went up from the waiting Redskins. Three fires had been started, and around these crouched men performing sinister rites.

Wooden spikes were being specially hardened. Knives were being made red-hot. Other knives for the skinning of the victim were being sharpened to razor-like keenness. Stones were being heated so that they glowed, and piles of fuel had been dragged in.

A hundred warriors with tomahawks started to dance round the monster captive, and every time they passed in front of O'Neil they pretended to strike at him.

Then the chief came forward and stopped the dance. Leaning close to his captive, he demanded in a loud voice.

"Before we start to kill you, Paleface, what have you to say for yourself? Is there any last request you would like to make?"

O'Neil growled deeply in his throat.

The chief flew into a rage and struck the prisoner on the nose with his hand. O'Neil turned his head as quick as lightning, there was a snapping sound, and the chief gave a howl of pain when he found himself minus two fingers. The prisoner had bitten them off.

"Set to work! Begin the torture! Make him suffer a thousand deaths!" bawled the infuriated chief.

Men with skinning knives rushed in to start their terrible work. One of the Indians with a red-hot stone held between sticks reached out and dropped it on O'Neil's right foot.

The Redskins fully expected the victim to jump, and jump he did! He gave a roar that caused his tormentors to start back in fear, and a moment later he had leapt a full yard in the air.

With him went the torture stake!

In his pain, the gorilla had redoubled his strength. The stake had been driven into the earth for a distance of six feet, and with one jerk he had lifted it more than halfway clear of the hole in which it was sunk.

The Redskins, recovering from their first shock, saw the danger and rushed forward. They were too late. Although they rained blows on O'Neil with their tomahawks, he continued to heave and struggle.

At last the stake came clear and O'Neil toppled forward, with the stake still attached behind his back, his arms encircling it.

Again the Redskins rushed to secure him afresh, but O'Neil's efforts to free himself prevented them from getting to grips with him. He bent himself almost double, and the great stake snapped in half. The two pieces fell through his bonds, and except for the ropes about his limbs, he was free.

Rolling over and over, defying their efforts of the Redskins to seize him, he snapped the ropes that held him.

Then he rose in his wrath, six feet six inches of him, hair bristling, eyes blazing, one foot still smarting from the effects of the red-hot stone.

The Redskins fled for their lives.

O'Neil started after them at top speed, but, discovering that his foot was too painful, he turned about and returned to the encampment.

Then he proceeded to wreck the tepees, beginning with the tepee of the chief. The gorilla went through the village like a hurricane, uprooting poles, slitting the sides of shelters, tearing everything to shreds.

On his way through the village he discovered his revolver and cartridge belt, which had been dropped when the Indians had fled. Slowly and clumsily, he fastened it about his mighty waist, and roared with pleasure at being so equipped once more.

Then a cunning gleam came to his eyes. He had learned a lot during the past few months, and one of the things he had learned was the power of fire.

He saw the fires which had been lighted at the torture place. One of these had been scattered and red-hot embers had set alight to a big birch-bark tepee. O'Neil watched the fire burning for some moments, then uprooted another tepee and pitched it on to the flames.

It likewise burned, and he beat his huge chest in triumph.

Then he collected other huts and shelters, dragged them to the scene, and increased the size of his bonfire. So fiercely did it burn that sparks flew all over the camp, and before long there were a dozen other fires blazing.

The Six-Gun Gorilla had very successfully set fire to the village. Those Indians were being made to pay dearly for the things they had done to him.

From the woods they watched the destruction, and did not dare interfere.

At last O'Neil decided to leave. He limped towards the woods, and, as they saw him coming, the braves whispered together. They levelled their bows. They were going to see what a hundred arrows would do to the King of the Palefaces!

"Let no man shoot until the Paleface reaches the first tree," ordered the chief.

So the Redskins waited, and O'Neil came steadily nearer, knowing nothing of what was awaiting him. His foot was getting more and more painful. He limped worse than ever. He winced and grimaced at every step, until he reached the first of the trees.

Then, just as the bows twanged, the giant gorilla leapt upwards for a high branch, caught it in one hand, swung himself forward until he caught the next tree, and vanished from the sight of the Redskins.

He had decided to give his foot a rest. It would be wise to travel in the treetops until he reached the edge of the prairie again.

The astonished Redskins were so startled by what they had seen that they shot no more arrows. They were left with their empty bows, blinking into the darkness of the woods, where the sound of creaking branches alone betrayed the gorilla's movements.

It did not take O'Neil very long to reach the bottom of the hills. There he found a stream, and steeped his foot in the water until he experienced some relief from the pain.

But his recent experience had upset his temper. Sight of the sunlit prairie before him did not improve his feelings. He knew that somewhere out there the waggons were on the move. With those waggons was the man he meant to kill.

Still limping, O'Neil began to pick up the trail. That was not difficult, for the waggon wheels had left their marks in the ground.

On and on he went, and the hills and the Redskins were left far behind. But the Six-Gun Gorilla was not travelling as fast as he would have wished. His injured foot prevented that. It became more and more painful, and sometimes he sat down to lick it.

At last he was forced to go on all fours, and then to hobble on three limbs. That cut down his pace still more.

Yet he did not think of stopping. He plodded on and on, confident that in the end he would come up with the waggon train.

The pioneers, on their part, had been making very good progress since dawn, but about the time when O'Neil's foot began to give him real trouble, they came to a serious obstacle.

A great valley lay before them. At the bottom of it ran a wide river. The near slope was so thickly bushed that it was necessary to hack a way through for the mules and the waggons.

Everyone was turned out for this, men, women, and children. They cut a roadway just the width of a waggon, and it took them two hours to do this.

But they got the waggons to the bottom, and found themselves confronted by a deep stretch of water with no apparent ford. Once again the spirit of the pioneers prevailed, for Corrigan had rocks and large stones rolled into the river to form a causeway.

This took another two hours. At last the mules dragged the waggons to the other side, and the party halted to take a midday meal.

Tutt Strawhan and one or two others had been left on the other side to form a rearguard. Judging by the way he kept looking behind him, Strawhan did not relish the job.

At last it was time for them to follow their friends across the river. Strawhan had one final glance round.

His eyes widened. His hands clenched the reins so tightly that his knuckles showed white.

He had just seen the Six-Gun Gorilla coming over the top of the valley and entering the bush-grown trail which had recently been cut to allow passage of the waggons.

For a moment Strawhan considered spurring his horse into the water and riding for his life, then a desperate, cunning look came into his crafty eyes.

He dismounted, rushed to the nearest bushes, and set them alight in several places. He had noticed that a strong breeze was blowing across the river. In a few moments a wall of flame would race to meet O'Neil.

Not until the slope was well alight did Strawhan turn and ride across the newly-made ford.

Will the wall of flame keep O'Neil from following the trail of the man he is out to kill? You'll find the answer to this question in next Tuesday's "Wizard."

BE TALL! Your height increased in 14 days or money back. Amazing course 5s. SEND STAMP NOW for Free Book. L. F. STEBBING SYSTEM, 28 Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

GORILLA v. BUFFALO IN A DUEL TO THE DEATH— READ ABOUT THIS TERRIFIC BATTLE BELOW!

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Battle of the Giants

WITH a crackling roar the flames rushed up the steep slope, feeding on the dense, dry bushes which grew there. So thick was the undergrowth that in two minutes the side of the valley above the river became a raging furnace.

From somewhere near the top of the slope there sounded a bellow of rage. There was a crashing of branches, and a gigantic figure went hurtling towards the top of the hill, running from the flames.

It was a gorilla, and one of its feet appeared to be damaged, for it was limping. Over six feet tall, and with a massive chest and long, powerful arms, it would have looked at home in an African forest, but here in the Wild West of America it was very much out of place.

With furious leaps it won clear of the flames, and reached the bare, grassy ridge above.

Below lay the river, wide and imposing. About half a mile away, on the opposite side from the gorilla, a number of waggons were moving along, drawn by mules and oxen. Pioneers were on trek, seeking new homes, but the gorilla's eyes were not for them.

In the rear of the pioneers, riding hard to catch up with them, was an evil-faced man with a red moustache. Now and again he turned his head, and grinned triumphantly at the fire which he had started.

The gorilla was maddened by the sight. It bellowed and beat its huge chest with its clenched fists.

Around its waist was a gun-belt, with a revolver in the holster. Over one shoulder was strapped a bandolier of cartridges. These were strange trappings to find on a gorilla, but there was a reason for them.

Until some months earlier the gorilla had belonged to a lone miner named Bart Masters, who had named it O'Neil.

Bart Masters had worked a little gold-mine in the hills of Colorado, and had taught the gorilla to be useful in many ways. He had even taught it to handle a revolver and to shoot. It had become deeply devoted to him.

Then one night a gang of gunmen, led by a ruffian named Tutt Strawhan, had arrived at the mine. They had murdered Masters, wounded the chained gorilla, and taken all the gold the old man had mined.

The gorilla had recovered, however, and when it had found that its beloved master was dead its rage had been terrible. It had taken the revolver and bandolier and set out on the trail of the ruffians.

So relentlessly had O'Neil hounded them that he had forced them to abandon the gold. He had never left their trail, killing them off one by one, until only Strawhan had remained alive.

The one-time leader of the gunmen had fled far from his usual haunts, had joined this party of pioneers under the name of Sinclair and had hoped that he had shaken off his terrible pursuer.

But the gorilla was still on the trail, and Strawhan would have been in its clutches if he had not set fire to the river bank. Even O'Neil could not pass through flames.

The great beast was mad with rage and pain. It had recently been captured and tortured by Redskins, and its left foot was sore and inflamed.

Its bellows of fury rose above the roar of the flames, and it started to limp along the bank in the hope of finding some other way down to the river.

But the wind was strong, and the flames were blown for more than a mile. Everywhere O'Neil went the roaring flames met him.

All this time the pioneers were getting further and further away, and with them went the man whom the Six-Gun Gorilla was determined to kill.

Grimly O'Neil set out to get round the fire, and when he had travelled two miles he came to a place where the river bank was bare of bushes. Here there was nothing to feed the fire. It had died out before it had reached this spot. With a growl of satisfaction the gorilla plunged down the steep slope to the water's edge.

The river was wide and swift, especially at this point. The pioneers had chosen the best crossing, but that was now in the midst of rolling smoke clouds. O'Neil could not go back there.

He hesitated for a moment, for he disliked crossing water, then with a low growl he waded forward. Fortunately the water was shallow and only came up to his knees.

There was a strong swirling current in the middle of the river, which would have swept any human being downstream, but O'Neil's colossal strength was more than a match for it and he soon reached the other bank.

An overhanging branch there gave him the necessary grip to haul himself ashore. He stood erect to shake himself, and from somewhere under the low trees there came a ferocious snort.

O'Neil showed his fangs and waited. Then the bushes parted, a huge, shaggy head appeared, and a pair of wicked red eyes stared angrily at him.

They were the eyes of a huge bull buffalo, an old beast which had been driven from the herd by the younger bulls. Its curved horns were yellowed with age, but its eyes were bloodshot and glistening with anger.

Sight of the gorilla emerging from the water had enraged it. Suddenly it charged.

The Six-Gun Gorilla snarled. He had seen buffalo only from a distance before this. There had been none in the hills of Colorado. But when he saw the lowered head and the curving horns he knew that his end would be sure if he did not get out of the way.

With a grunt of annoyance, he leapt for the overhanging branch of a tree.

But he weighed six hundred pounds, and these scrubby trees out on the prairie were not made to withstand such a strain. The branch promptly broke, and he fell backwards —on top of the charging buffalo.

The charging beast pulled up short at the water, and swung around. The Six-Gun Gorilla rolled over to one side, dazed and winded.

The thunder of hoofs, and the sight of those wicked horns approaching, roused him, and he got to his knees in time to grab the extended horns, one in either hand.

Then he found himself lifted from the ground and forced backwards, but if he was startled by this, the buffalo was also startled by the immense weight of its adversary. It could not now raise its head.

The two beasts came to a standstill about forty yards further on, and the maddened buffalo began to toss its head and stamp in frenzy. O'Neil got his feet to the ground, and balanced himself more firmly. He still retained his grip on those horns.

This way and that plunged the bull buffalo, but O'Neil did not slacken his hold. He leaned on the brute's head, his immense weight tiring the buffalo out.

Then O'Neil took the offensive, twisting and heaving with all his strength. The buffalo bellowed. O'Neil roared. It was a clash of giants.

O'Neil leaned forward and tried to sink his teeth into the top of the buffalo's head, but all he encountered was hard bone that even his long fangs could not penetrate. The pain drove the buffalo to greater efforts. It managed to lift O'Neil off the ground once more, and rushed him at top speed into a tree.

Crash! If the tree had not fallen over O'Neil would have been smashed to death. As it was, he was badly crushed and bruised. He gasped for breath, managed to get his adversary's head down again, and gave another heave.

The buffalo's head was turning. It was a trial of sheer strength. The gorilla's grip did not slacken. He had the strength of ten men.

Slowly, inch by inch, he levered on those horns, until with a roar of rage the great bull buffalo crashed over on its side. Once on the ground its doom was sealed. The Six-Gun Gorilla knelt and completed his grim task, twisting until he had broken the buffalo's neck.

The great beast lay still. After some minutes O'Neil relaxed his hold and tottered to his feet. He could hardly stand.

Under a tree he fell on his side, his chest heaving, his body caked with sweat.

Then gradually his heart stopped thumping so wildly. His limbs relaxed. He closed his eyes and slept.

For the time being he was too tired to follow the pioneers. Every minute he lay there they were getting further and further away, but O'Neil was not thinking about that. He was getting his strength back, recovering from what had been one of the sternest ordeals of his life.

The Dawn Visitor

TUTT STRAWHAN had often looked back towards the cloud of smoke beside the river, wondering what O'Neil was doing. If the gunman had only known it he could have gone back and shot the gorilla as it lay exhausted.

Strawhan was not to know that, however. His one idea was to get as far away as possible before O'Neil could cross the river. He urged the pioneers to drive faster.

He had already told them that the gorilla was a dangerous monster, which had escaped from a circus. He had not dared to tell them that it was trailing him, and him alone, for he was afraid that they might decide to get rid of his presence. It was essential that he should have company. He feared to be alone.

His fear puzzled the pioneers. He had shown no trace of fear when he had saved them from a Redskin ambush, and his strange horror of this hairy monster was something they did not understand.

Three of them dropped to the rear to open fire on O'Neil if he managed to cross the river, but when hour followed hour, and they did not so much as glimpse him, they relaxed their vigilance.

"Guess the brute's turned back," they said. "He didn't like that warm welcome you gave him on the river bank. Give up worrying about him, Sinclair."

The outlaw tried to keep calm, but the fear persisted that he had not seen the last of O'Neil, and when camp was made that evening he was as nervous as a kitten.

To add to his dismay, Corrigan, the leader of the pioneers, said that he had never seen a finer piece of country than that which they were now in.

"Guess it's what we've been looking for," he said. "If it looks as good in daylight as it does now I reckon we'll settle here. There's good grazing, rich soil, water, an' timber. What more do we want?"

His companions nodded approval. They had travelled hundreds of miles seeking such a place. They were all eager to settle.

Tutt Strawhan's heart missed a beat.

"But—but the Injuns!" he protested. "They're too strong in this district. You couldn't live in peace here."

"There are Injuns everywhere," snorted Corrigan. "We'll have to teach 'em to leave us alone. Sooner or later they'll be driven further west, then we'll be at peace. We're not scared o' Injuns."

The waggons were pulled up in the usual formation for the night, and men hustled about getting wood for the fire, and water from a nearby stream. Tutt Strawhan gripped his rifle and shivered.

He had not expected this to happen so soon. If the pioneers were going no further what was going to happen to him? He had expected them to go for hundreds of miles further west.

But if they settled here, with O'Neil only a few hours behind, it would mean another clash with him before long. The Six-Gun Gorilla would arrive in the morning at the latest, and then—the outlaw shuddered.

There was only one thing he could do. He must go on alone. He must cover up his trail as best he could, and head for the southern plains.

But he would not go empty-handed. During the days he had travelled with the waggons he had discovered that Corrigan was in charge of the pioneers' money. He had an iron-bound box in his waggon that contained the community funds. Corrigan slept under that waggon at night, with a gun at his side. It would not be easy to rob him, but Strawhan meant to do it.

Cunningly the gunman pretended to throw off his fears, declared that they could not find a finer spot in which to settle, and joined the men round the fireside for the final smoke and yarn when the women and children had gone to their blankets.

During the course of the evening he had accumulated a stock of cartridges and foodstuffs, a roll of blankets, and many other things that he needed for the journey.

All these articles he stowed under a bush, where he could get them without trouble. He even picked out the horse which he intended taking when he fled.

At last the men separated for the night. Sentries were always set, and Strawhan volunteered for the midnight spell. He meant to make his getaway during his two hours on watch.

When the time came for him to take his spell he posted himself in a good position. One man was on similar duty on the other side of the waggons. The rest of the pioneers were asleep.

Strawhan began his foul work when things had settled down again. He meant to have no interruption from his fellow-sentry. Down on hands and knees he went, and crawled under the waggons, coming up behind the unsuspecting man.

There was a flash of steel, and the luckless sentry sank down with a knife under his left shoulder blade, and Strawhan's big left hand over his mouth to stifle any outcry.

The man died at once. The outlaw had not the slightest hesitation in leaving him lying there.

His next move was to a waggon where he knew spare clothing was kept. From this he selected a complete new kit for himself, removed the clothes he wore, and tossed them aside, dressing himself in the stolen rigout.

Only one thing remained to be done. He had to get that money. Stealthily he approached the waggon where Corrigan lay breathing heavily. Some children slept inside the waggon.

The waggon creaked a little as he climbed up at the back, and he waited to see if the slight noise had attracted any attention. Nobody stirred.

The children lay sleeping peacefully. His lips curled as he reached over them towards the iron-bound box. He lifted it clear of the floor and backed away.

He had actually got down to the ground behind the tailboard of the waggon when Corrigan wakened and sat up with a jerk.

"Who's that?" he grunted.

There was no time for Tutt Strawhan to use his gun or snatch up a knife. Instead he swung the heavy, iron-bound box straight at the man's face, and a corner of it caught Corrigan on the forehead. He slumped backwards, senseless.

Breathing hard, Tutt Strawhan crouched to await developments, but once again his luck had held. Nobody else in the camp had been roused.

After a minute or so Tutt Strawhan collected the things which he had left under a bush, and made for the horse lines. The cash box and most of the gear went into the saddlebags which he had brought for the purpose, and within a few seconds he was leading the surprised horse away into the darkness.

O'Neil was fighting the battle of his life. If he failed to win, his master's murderer would escape scot-free.

Not until he was well clear of the sleeping camp did he mount and ride hard for the south. No one heard the beat of those hoofs.

Corrigan was the first to raise the alarm. He came to his senses with blood caked on his face and his head throbbing with pain. Then, still half-dazed, he lurched to his feet and shouted for the rest of the camp to waken.

In a moment or two the camp was awake, and men stood to their posts. It was fully ten minutes before they discovered what had really happened.

The discovery of the dead sentry enraged them more than anything else. When it was found out that the cash box and a horse had disappeared, some of the men wanted to ride in pursuit at once.

Corrigan checked them.

"No good would come of it," he growled. "The skunk is probably miles away by this time. If we follow him we only leave the women and kids unprotected. Maybe there are Injuns about. We're better where we are, but if we ever lay hands on that rat again—"

Growls of rage from the other pioneers indicated what would happen to Strawhan if he ever crossed their path in the future.

There was no sleep for them that night. How long they had slept without sentries

watching over them they did not know, but they did know that they had been exposed to a fearful risk. The Redskins could have rushed the camp any time after Strawhan had deserted with his loot. That was another thing they could not forgive the scoundrel for.

Dawn found them still counting their losses. Crouching over the fire in the chilly mist at sunrise, they were suddenly aroused by a shout from one of the look-outs.

"He's coming back! Someone coming through the mist!" he roared.

Half a dozen rifles were instantly raised and levelled. Something was certainly moving out there beyond the edge of the camp.

"Is that you, Sinclair? Put up your arms or you're a dead man!" shouted Corrigan.

The only reply was a low growl, and to the surprise of the pioneers, the erect figure dropped on hands and knees. A moment later, before anyone could fire, it had leapt more than twenty feet in a single bound, and was right beside them.

It was not the scoundrel who had robbed and betrayed them, but the Six-Gun Gorilla.

Sheer surprise held the pioneers spell-bound. Not a shot was fired. They stared in dumb amazement at the huge beast. Gun in fist, O'Neil stood regarding them from beneath his fierce eyebrows.

Slowly his eyes travelled along their line of anxious faces, then with a grunt he deliberately turned his back on them and walked away.

"Quiet!" hissed Corrigan. "Don't shoot. He doesn't mean us any harm. We don't want a fight here, in the middle of the camp."

They held their breath as O'Neil made for the nearest waggon, reared up to his full height, and peered inside. His nostrils were quivering. He was relying on his powers of smell as well as his sight.

"He's looking for something," whispered someone.

"Or someone!" muttered another of the pioneers. "Don't upset him. Perhaps he'll go away."

Screams came from another of the waggons as the Six-Gun Gorilla peered in over the tail-board. To the women and children he seemed like a fiend.

The men stood silent, covering him with their guns. Some of them were beginning to realise what this was all about. If O'Neil had touched a woman or a child they would instantly have riddled him with bullets, but for the moment they held their fire, waiting to see what happened.

From waggon to waggon he went, sniffing, peering, terrifying the occupants who were awake.

At last he came to the waggon where the spare clothing and other stores were kept. The watching men had expected him to pass that quickly, but to their surprise he gave a ferocious roar, and leapt inside.

"By gosh! Now, what's he found?" breathed Corrigan.

O'Neil Gets His Man

A MOMENT later the Six-Gun Gorilla re-appeared. He held a bundle of clothes which the pioneers at once recognised as having belonged to Strawhan.

Every hair on O'Neil's body was bristling. His fangs were bared, and from his throat came a continuous growl. With one movement of his powerful hands he tore the clothes to shreds, dropped them on the ground, and jumped on them.

Then the onlookers were appalled by his display of ferocity, as he tore, ripped, and stamped on those clothes until nothing but a few shreds remained.

Cowed and terrified, even the women and children became silent as they watched.

When at last those articles of clothing were no more than shreds, O'Neil turned away, went down on hands and knees to snuffle the ground, and ran on all fours towards the edge of the camp.

Corrigan was the first to break the silence.

"He—he's after Sinclair!" he gasped. "Sinclair's the only one he wants. Those were Sinclair's clothes. The brute's got it in for him for some reason. I wonder what he did to it."

"Something low-down, I bet!" growled one of the others. "Let it go after him. If it catches up with him an' pulls him to pieces so much the better—the dirty skunk!"

Growls of approval came from the rest of the pioneers.

At last O'Neil found Tutt Strawhan's trail. In some uncanny way O'Neil had discovered the spot where Strawhan had mounted, and although the killer's scent was no longer on the ground, the gorilla had only to follow the tracks of the horse to hunt him down.

The pioneers watched the great beast disappear into the distance.

Then Corrigan spoke grimly.

"D'you know, I've an idea we needn't worry about that skunk Sinclair getting his deserts," he said. "That gorilla sure means business. One o' these days, sooner or later, he'll catch up with Sinclair, and then——"

The rest of the men nodded. They were all of the same opinion.

O'Neil was going as fast as his injured foot would allow him. That foot still gave him pain. He had been unable to rest it, and the part which had been burnt had become inflamed and raw. The constant pain urged him on like a spur.

There was no longer any need for him to sniff the ground. The tracks made by the stolen horse were clear enough to his keen eyes. He travelled sometimes on all fours, sometimes standing erect.

Ahead the country became open and rolling. It was real prairie, with little more vegetation than some grass and bush. The folds of the country were like waves on the ocean, and it was impossible to see more than one ridge ahead.

The sun rose higher and higher in the sky, and O'Neil suffered from the heat, but he did not slow down. Somehow he seemed to realise that the end of his chase was not far off. Somewhere on the prairie he would come up with the man who had killed the one person he loved, and then he would take his vengeance.

He was hungry as well as thirsty, but there was nothing here for him to eat, neither fruit, vegetables, or berries.

Hour followed hour, and then as he came to the top of an extra high ridge, he saw something in the distance which made him snarl.

It was a solitary rider going southwards. The horse seemed to be very weary.

The Six-Gun Gorilla took it for granted that the lone rider was Strawhan. It did not enter his head that there might be someone else on the open prairie. To him this was as good as the end of the chase, and he broke into a straggling run.

Gradually he made up on the rider. Presently he was no more than half a mile behind, then a quarter. He tried to put on an extra spurt, but even his great strength was failing. He could go no faster.

The country was changing now, becoming rougher and more deeply indented. When not more than a quarter of a mile ahead O'Neil heard the sharp crack of a gun, followed by other reports in quick succession.

For a moment he thought that the man he was pursuing was shooting at him, and he instinctively crouched to the ground, but when there came no whistle of bullets he realised that the shots had not been fired at him. The shooting was in the other direction.

On all fours, O'Neil scampered for the top of the next rise, and looked over the top. He saw the horseman, crouching behind his dead horse, shooting rapidly at a score or so of Redskins who had evidently ambushed him from one of the gullies which abounded in the region. The horse was stuck full of arrows. The Redskins must have deliberately aimed at the horse in order to bring the man down.

Now they were closing in on him from all sides at once, wriggling over the ground, using every scrap of cover.

The lone man fired two more shots from behind his horse. He was selling his life dearly, but he could not watch all sides at once.

Two Indians fell in the front, but half a dozen others rose and sped forward from the rear. They were now no more than a dozen yards from their intended victim.

O'Neil's great hands twitched. Did these Redskins think that he was going to give up his cherished victim to them? Did they think that they were going to cheat him out of his venegance after all he had gone through?

The lone traveller turned on his side, conscious of danger from the rear, but he was too late. The Redskins made a wild rush, and swarmed over him before he could swing his gun about.

Then a wild whoop rose from the others as they closed in to help their comrades master the struggling man. He disappeared beneath a heap of them.

O'Neil waited no longer. Down the slope he went with great leaps and bounds, careless of the pain to his foot. He landed on top of the struggling, heaving mass with enough force to knock the breath from the bodies of the Redskins beneath him, and the next moment he went into action.

He did not use the gun. His huge hands were sufficient for the purpose.

The fight lasted no more than three minutes, and during that time the Redskins were hurled right and left like earth flying from a mechanical excavator. Few of them escaped without broken bones. Their shrieks and cries of fear resounded far over the prairie.

At last their victim was uncovered. No Redskin was left within a dozen yards of him. Those few who had escaped death or injury were fleeing for their lives, convinced that some demon had descended upon them from the clouds.

The white man lay still. He had been crushed and battered into unconsciousness. O'Neil gave a terrible cry of triumph, and snatched him up in both hands, much as a child would snatch at a doll.

This was the moment to which he had looked forward for a long time. Now there was nothing to prevent him taking his revenge on his hated enemy. He turned his victim about to get a better hold, then stared at the face revealed to him.

It was not Tutt Strawhan at all. This weathered face had no red moustaches, but a neat black beard. It was not the hated killer, that O'Neil had in his grip, but a total stranger, some lone buffalo hunter who had blundered across the trail of the man the Six-Gun Gorilla was hunting.

The gorilla's fingers relaxed their hold. The man slumped to the ground and grunted. O'Neil stood over him, glaring savagely in all directions.

He did not want to harm this stranger. He had no quarrel with him. Actually he had done the man a good turn by rescuing him from the Redskins, but O'Neil thought nothing of that. He was no longer interested in the fate of the hunter.

The gorilla had blundered, but Strawhan could not be far away. Somewhere the trails had crossed, and O'Neil had followed the wrong one. But sooner or later he would catch up with the man he sought.

Next week O'Neil comes to grips with Tutt Strawhan! Don't miss this thrilling instalment of this great story!

256 PAGES packed with Smashing Stories, Cartoons, Pictures, Jokes, &c., &c.
AND ALL FOR A SHILLING!
THE WIZARD HOLIDAY BOOK FOR BOYS
On Sale At All Newsagents.

Tutt Strawhan's new allies in his fight against the Six-Gun Gorilla—TWO THOUSAND BUFFALOES !

THE SIX-GUN GORILLA

The Living Wall of Death

THE horse was on its last legs. Even the goading and beating of the rider could not make it quicken its stride. Its head hung low, and its eyes were glazed.

All around stretched the limitless prairie. Horse and rider were heading south, and neither of them knew just how many miles they had come since they had started their mad flight.

Once the beast stumbled and threw the man heavily. He lay there for some minutes before rising to his feet and kicking the horse until it lurched up once more.

The man himself was gaunt, his eyes were deeply sunk and red-rimmed with fatigue. Every now and again he would glance round as though afraid of something in the rear.

Terror had him in its grip. He was almost certain that he was being pursued, and that was why he was trying to reach the border in record time.

The country through which Tutt Strawhan was passing was Redskin country, but he did not fear the Indians. He scarcely thought of the Indians when he looked behind him every few minutes. What he feared to see was a huge, hairy monster—a giant gorilla !

Not many months before this, Tutt Strawhan had been the leader of a gang of gunmen. He and his gang had been feared all over Colorado.

Then Strawhan had heard of a rich little gold-mine run by a lone miner named Bart Masters. This miner had a tame gorilla called O'Neil, which he had trained to work for him. To amuse himself, Bart Masters had even taught the great creature to use a revolver, and it was never happier than when it was wearing a gun-belt and bandolier.

Tutt Strawhan had heard of Bart Masters' gold strike, and with his gang had raided the mine one evening, killed Masters, shot and wounded the gorilla, and escaped with the gold.

The gorilla's fury had been terrible when it had recovered and found its master dead. It had taken the revolver and cartridge belt and had set off after the killers.

For months it had kept on their heels. So relentless had been the pursuit that it had forced them to abandon the gold, and one by one had killed them off, until now only Tutt Strawhan remained alive.

O'Neil had dogged Strawhan so persistently that in his terror the killer had gone out into the far West with a party of pioneers, hoping to escape.

But escape was not for him. The Six-Gun Gorilla was still on his trail. In desperation, Strawhan had robbed the pioneers as they slept one night, had taken the best horse they possessed, and had started for the border.

The border was much farther away than he had expected, however. Each time he topped a ridge he looked anxiously ahead, wondering if he was nearing his destination.

All he saw was more prairie, more grass, more ridges.

The horse he was riding was heavily laden with supplies and an iron box which contained the money Strawhan had stolen from the pioneers. The outlaw had not hesitated to rob them of all they possessed, even though they had befriended him and trusted him.

Now this box bumped to and fro in the saddle-bag alongside the horse's right flank. It unbalanced the beast. If Strawhan had had the time to spare he would have opened the box and removed the money to his pockets, but the box was locked, and it would take a long while to force it open.

Down into a hollow stumbled the horse, and immediately sank to its knees in mud. There was a muskeg swamp which Strawhan had failed to notice. The horse had walked right into it.

Strawhan shouted and raved, tugged and heaped blows on the luckless beast, but it had not the strength to pull itself out of the mud. Gradually it sank to its death, and the once-feared gang-leader was helpless to prevent it.

At the last moment he removed the saddle-bag containing the iron box, and when he staggered back to firm ground he still carried this.

He could not afford to lose the valuable box. It was no use crossing the border and entering a new country without some money. He was determined to keep the box until he could get at the cash.

So the sun blazed down on a bent stumbling figure which staggered southwards with a saddle-bag slung over one shoulder. Tutt Strawhan was on the verge of collapse, but fear made him stagger on.

" It won't get me ! It won't !" he gasped to himself. " I'll cheat it yet. It got all the others, but it won't get me !"

He forced himself onwards, but still he turned round and looked back each time he topped a ridge.

Gradually Strawhan's progress became slower and slower, until at last he climbed an extra high ridge, and paused for breath. Then he rubbed his eyes.

The prairie below him seemed to be alive with movement. At first he thought that the figures before him were men, but when he came to look more closely he realised that he was looking down on the biggest herd of bison he had ever seen.

There were thousands of them down there. They formed a mass several miles long, and they were moving very slowly in his direction as they grazed.

" Meat !" grunted the hunted man. " Meat enough for an army. If someone could only shoot 'em an' sell 'em to the contractors building that new railroad ! The hides alone would be worth a fortune."

So taken was he with the idea that it was some minutes before he thought to look behind him.

When he did look back, the saddle-bag containing the iron box dropped to the ground with a thud. Strawhan's eyes bulged, and beads of sweat showed on his face. At last his fears were realised. There in the distance he could see his terrible pursuer.

It was only a moving speck, but he knew at one glance, by its curious shambling walk, that that speck was the Six-Gun Gorilla. Like himself, the gorilla was tired. It had travelled farther than he, for it had taken a false trail at the start.

But now it was making no mistake. It was heading directly along his tracks. Suddenly, as Strawhan stood watching it, he saw it stop for a moment, raise itself to its full height and stare, apparently looking straight at him.

" It's seen me !" he gasped.

He turned and fled down the other side of the ridge. His feet felt like lead, but he forced himself along.

In all that vast expanse of prairie he could see no hiding-place.

Then ahead of him he saw the army of buffalo, and an idea occurred to him.

The Six-Gun Gorilla was following him by scent and sight. When it could not see him it was sniffing the ground and picking out his scent.

If he could only pass through that mass of buffalo the gorilla would lose the trail. Not even a gorilla could track him over ground trampled by thousands of buffalo.

Tutt Strawhan's heart beat with fresh hope. He kept steadily on his way towards the herd, and as he drew nearer he slowed his pace to a slow walk. He did not want to disturb or alarm the herd.

To make things even better, he plucked some branches from bushes which he passed, and held them around him as camouflage. By moving very slowly he believed that he would pass unnoticed. The wind was carrying his scent away from the herd so he would not be betrayed by that.

Nearer and nearer to the outskirts of the herd he went, sometimes looking behind him.

Now he was amongst the stragglers at the front of the herd. One or two lifted their shaggy heads and glared at him suspiciously, but he stood perfectly still until they looked away, then moved on a little farther.

It was nerve-racking work passing through the grazing herd. At any other time he would not have dared try it. If the brutes had stampeded when he was in their midst, he would not have lasted ten seconds.

For more than twenty minutes he passed through the lanes of grazing buffalo, and not until he was on slightly higher ground on the farther side did he again glance to the rear.

His hand grasped his gun impulsively. He got a shock when he saw how close the Six-Gun Gorilla had come.

All that now separated them was the herd of buffalo. The gorilla was on the other side of it, and had stopped to stare at the moving mass before him.

"If he tries to come through there—they'll stampede!" gasped Tutt Strawhan, and just then an idea came to him. "Why not? Why shouldn't they be stampeded—in the other direction?"

It had suddenly occurred to him that he could start a stampede from his side and send the army of buffalo towards the oncoming gorilla. Anything in the path of the buffalo would be wiped out.

No sooner had the idea occurred to the hunted scoundrel than he jerked out his gun and aimed it over the backs of the unsuspecting beasts.

Crack-crack-crack! He fired rapidly, at the same time shouting at the top of his voice.

Several thousand buffalo raised their heads and gazed in the direction of the shots. Strawhan fired at one of the nearest brutes and caught it in the shoulder with a bullet. The startled beast roared with pain, and retreated towards the others. They all stirred restlessly.

Crack-crack! Tutt Strawhan well knew how to start cattle moving. He had learned that during his cattle-rustling days.

When he had reloaded and advanced towards them, the mass of shaggy creatures started to move the other way. One or two bulls turned and lowered their heads, but they did this only to give the others time to get clear. The main herd was on the move, and they were heading faster and faster away from Strawhan.

Strawhan shouted and yelled at the top of his voice and waved his arms vigorously as he jumped up and down.

The buffalo broke into a gallop. Strawhan knew that he had succeeded, for those on the move pushed the others, and after that nothing could stop them.

There came a sound like distant thunder as their hoofs beat the ground. In one solid mass they stampeded towards the north.

Tutt Strawhan stood with hands on hips, and grinned. Right in their path was the Six-Gun Gorilla. It seemed that at last Strawhan had got rid of his awful pursuer.

Strawhan's Last Refuge

O'NEIL had been startled when first he had seen this mass of animals between him and his victim. He had never seen such a big herd before and he stared in amazement at the beasts.

Then his hand went to the holster on his hip and drew his gun. He had some idea of shooting them out of his way! He had learned that the gun could do many things.

His hideous face was twisted more viciously than ever as he prepared to fire a shot. He screwed up one eye in comical fashion, then jerked it open again when the sound of shots came from the other side of the herd.

Tutt Strawhan had started his efforts to stampede the mass of beasts, and almost at once the herd got on the move. Things happened quickly after that. The Six-Gun Gorilla got the shock of his life when he saw that the whole herd was advancing towards him. He saw a forest of tossing horns and lowered heads.

O'Neil backed away a few yards and bared his teeth. Here was something he knew he could not stand against.

He began to retreat more quickly, for the buffalo were gaining speed. From a walk they had trotted, then cantered, and now they were coming at a mad gallop.

So much dust was stirred up and drifted before him that O'Neil could no longer see his enemy on the other side of the herd. The living wall bore down on him.

O'Neil suddenly stopped in his tracks and stood snarling viciously. He had decided to face them after all.

Standing at his full height, with huge arms held out before him like a wrestler about to come to grips, he awaited the onslaught.

The buffalo came on as though unaware of O'Neil's presence. They were blind with rage and fear. Nothing could check them. Trees or other obstacles would have been brushed out of their path. A similar fate would overtake the Six-Gun Gorilla if he stayed where he was.

At the last moment O'Neil realised this. He saw a thousand levelled horns, sensed the irresistible force behind this rush, and gave a grunt. The next moment he had leapt upwards and forwards, on to their backs.

The beasts which felt his hairy touch would have stopped, but those behind would not allow them to do this. The moving mass swept on, and with it went the Six-Gun Gorilla, sprawling on the back of that living sea of animals.

So tightly were the buffalo wedged together that it was impossible for him to fall to the ground again.

Snarling, spitting, tearing with his powerful hands at everything within reach, O'Neil was thrown from one beast to another. For two minutes he was treated like a schoolboy being tossed in a blanket, but gradually his wits returned, and he awaited his chance.

Have YOU seen the beezer news on Page 13?

CRISPIN GAUNT IS COMING!

You'll meet this amazing man next week in the smashing new story—

"Crispin Gaunt's Ragtime Railway"

A quick grab and he had got hold of a thick mane of hair, had steadied himself, and risen to his feet.

His flexible toes gave a good hold on anything. He managed to remain erect. He started to run across the backs of the moving herd. He staggered as he ran, but he managed to retain his balance.

The noise the buffalo made was deafening, and he added his angry roar to it.

Once he lost his balance and fell astride a huge black bull, which carried him with it for more than a mile before he managed to scramble on to another of its neighbours. O'Neil did not want to go with the herd. He was like a swimmer trying to go against the tide. He wanted to go in the opposite direction.

How long he scrambled about on the backs of the buffalo he did not know, but when at last he fell forward on to the hard, trampled ground, and saw no more of the herd coming, he knew that he had reached the end of his perilous "journey."

The earth still trembled to the passing of those thousands of feet. O'Neil lay there listening to the vibrations, and gradually got his breath back.

Then he rose and shook himself, felt to make sure that his gun was still in its holster, and glared ahead.

Tutt Strawhan had gone out of sight. The scoundrel had chuckled evilly when he had seen the herd heading for his terrible pursuer, but he had made off as soon as he was certain that the herd would not stop. He was no longer to be seen.

The Six-Gun Gorilla began to nose around, trying to pick up his enemy's trail but he could not find it, which was not surprising, considering the mass of hoofs which had passed over the ground.

O'Neil went round in ever-increasing circles, until suddenly away in the distance he heard a sound that he recognised—the sound of a shot.

Instantly he turned and headed in that direction. He did not trouble to nose the ground. He felt sure that the shot had been fired by Strawhan.

Suddenly another shot rang out, followed quickly by two others. This time there could be no mistake. The shots had been fired less than a mile away.

The Six-Gun Gorilla limped swiftly southwards. The thought of catching up with Strawhan made him forget about the pain in his foot which had recently been badly burned.

His rush carried him over the ground at a great pace, until he came again to rising ground, reached the top, and stopped, his bushy eyebrows coming together as he scowled in wonder at what he saw.

A fight was going on between Redskins and someone who had sought refuge in the midst of a pile of large boulders. On the ground near these boulders lay a saddle-bag. A score of mounted Redskins were riding round and round, whooping and firing with their bows at the refuge of the solitary white man.

Shots were coming from the midst of the boulders. Tutt Strawhan seemed to have run into the Redskins and had hurriedly sought shelter.

The Six-Gun Gorilla's eyes remained fixed on the scene below. His hair bristled, and a low growl came from the back of his throat. He could not see Strawhan, but he knew that the man he sought was in amongst those boulders. If O'Neil did not hurry up and claim him these red-skinned warriors would kill Strawhan.

Two more shots rang out and one of the Redskins toppled from his horse. The other warriors at once closed the gap and continued their circling tactics.

Strawhan must have known that he could not escape, for he was firing rapidly, much too rapidly for his scant supply of ammunition. When that was gone he would have nothing but his bare hands to defend himself against this horde.

The Redskins knew that, and were waiting until he should cease firing.

Closer and closer edged the horses, until the pile of boulders was almost hidden by them. The Six-Gun Gorilla started down the hill, and he was clever enough to go on all fours, for he did not want to be seen yet.

The shots were now fewer. Strawhan was nearing the end of his tether. The Indians were watching closely lest he should try to make a despairing dash for one of the ponies of the fallen warriors.

Suddenly there was an appalling roar, and a huge figure rose and dashed towards the Redskins.

The Redskins turned round in alarm and saw O'Neil seize one of the riderless ponies and throw it over on its side. The horses nearby squealed with fear and reared up on their hind-legs. The circle was broken, and through the gap he had made dashed the Six-Gun Gorilla.

A strangled cry came from amongst the boulders. Tutt Strawhan had seen the gorilla at last. A moment later two shots caught O'Neil in the chest and made him stagger for an instant.

But the bullets did not penetrate very far. His matted hair checked them. The flesh wounds only made O'Neil more angry, and he reached the pile of boulders in a leap.

The Redskins drew back, scared and bewildered by this interruption. None of them had ever seen a gorilla before. They could not make out whether it was beast or human.

O'Neil went round and round, trying to find out where Strawhan was. The fugitive had crawled right into the midst of the boulders and hidden.

But O'Neil knew Strawhan was there. The gorilla could smell him. It wrinkled its black lips in a vicious snarl and gripped one of the boulders.

It must have weighed half a ton, but with a single swing of his arms O'Neil sent it rolling half a dozen yards away.

The Indians watched, dumb with amazement. The gorilla caught hold of another huge boulder and hurled it in another direction.

The hidden man fired two more shots but neither hit nor scared O'Neil who went on with his task of unearthing Tutt Strawhan. He scattered those boulders with the speed and fury of a hurricane.

At last only two of these rocks remained. The Six-Gun Gorilla gripped one, and wrenched.

It rolled aside, and Strawhan was at last revealed. Before O'Neil could release his hold on the boulder and spring on his foe, the gunman had jerked up his revolver and fired twice at point-blank range. Both bullets took O'Neil in the throat.

The great creature gave a howl of pain and wrath, relaxed his hold on the boulder, and let it fall. A second later he fell beside it, and lay still.

Tutt Strawhan gave a whoop of joy. Careless of the onlookers, he rushed from his hiding-place and climbed on top of the fallen gorilla. There he danced a wild jig of joy.

"Got you! Got you at last!" he roared. "I was too clever for you, O'Neil. You should have left me alone. Now you're dead—dead as that fool master of yours!"

He lowered his gun to pump a few more shots into the huge body; but the weapon merely clicked harmlessly. He had fired his last cartridge.

O'Neil Fires His Last Shot

THE realisation of this brought Strawhan back to his senses. As he reached into his pocket for cartridges, he became aware of horsemen looming over him. The Redskins had closed in again. They had seen the hairy demon slain by their intended victim, and they were no longer afraid.

When Tutt Strawhan looked up into those painted, merciless faces, he gasped with fear.

Frantically he searched for more cartridges, determined to die by his own hand rather than fall into the grip of these Redskins. But there was not a single cartridge left. He had fired the last one into O'Neil. He was defenceless. The Redskins would take him alive after all.

"No, no!" he roared, as they jumped from their horses and tried to seize him. "No, no, not the torture-stake!"

The Indians bore him to the ground and beat him to silence. He had gained nothing by pumping those last two shots into O'Neil. In his excitement he had fired away that final shot which he had always intended reserving for himself.

He was now at the mercy of these red fiends, and he knew what that meant. Horrible and prolonged torture would be his fate. It would have been better to have died at the hands of the Six-Gun Gorilla!

The Redskins watched their prisoner carefully, but not one of them went near the gorilla. They eyed it from a distance, and were satisfied to see it lying so still. They could see the blood on the ground from its head-wound.

Immense it looked, even when it sprawled helplessly beside the last remaining boulder. It was lying face down, and the broad width of its back impressed the Indians greatly.

"Truly this must be the biggest man who ever lived!" they muttered. "He is neither Paleface nor Redskin. He must come of another tribe."

Two of them stood guard over Strawhan while the rest of them collected wood to make a fire. They were very elated with their success, and intended taking Strawhan back to their village as soon as their horses were rested.

Meanwhile they squatted round the fire. The wood they used was small stuff, gathered from the nearby bushes. It crackled loudly as it burned, and threw sparks into the air.

One spark drifted over the heads of the Indians and settled on the broad back of O'Neil. The gorilla's hair began to smoulder.

Tutt Strawhan lay between his two guards, rolling his eyes in terror.

The spark on the gorilla's back burnt deeper. It reached the flesh.

A tremor ran through O'Neil. There was still life in the great creature. The pain of the burn was penetrating his dazed senses.

Suddenly he opened his eyes, and tried to turn his head. The pain in his neck prevented this, so he rolled on his side.

From there he could see the fire, the Redskins, and to one side the man he had hunted for so many months, the killer of his master!

O'Neil bared his teeth, but even that movement hurt him. He set a hairy hand to the ground, and forced himself to a sitting position. As he was outside the circle of the firelight he remained unseen. His fierce eyes gleamed with hate.

He was not going to be cheated out of his revenge. These men with the feathers in their hair were not going to have his victim!

Painfully he dragged himself towards the one remaining boulder. It was one of the biggest of the pile he had scattered. Grasping it with both hands, he hauled himself erect. His wounds were draining his massive body of its strength, but he made one supreme effort, heaved the boulder high above his head, and tossed it straight into that circle of Redskins.

Crash! It came down on the fire and scattered it in all directions.

Crack-crack-crack! O'Neil had fallen into a sitting position after the effort of that throw. He now started to open fire with his revolver. Bullets whistled amongst the startled Redskins.

Three or four of them fell. At that range even O'Neil could not miss. Then with a mighty effort the Six-Gun Gorilla rose to his feet and lurched forward.

The surviving Redskins waited no longer. They could not face this terrible, bloodstained apparition. With one accord they turned and fled for their horses.

A voice rang out. It was the voice of Tutt Strawhan—

"Take me with you!" he screamed. "For the love of mercy, take me away from here! Don't leave me!"

In his fear of the approaching gorilla Strawhad forgotten the torture-stake to which he had been doomed. Now he would have welcomed being carried away by the Indians.

But they neither understood what he was saying, nor cared. They wanted to get out of reach of this hairy giant who had the strength of ten men.

O'Neil stood swaying to and fro as he watched the Redskins go. He was rocking weakly at the knees. Blood was pouring from his wounds. He could not last much longer.

But he still had one duty to perform. He groped his way to where Strawhan lay, and face he knew that his end had come. He knew that Bart Masters was going to be avenged.

A hairy paw reached for him, and lifted him clear of the ground. O'Neil held him up and peered at him as if to make sure that it was Strawhan he had captured.

But there was no mistaking the scent which O'Neil had followed for so long. Even now his hair bristled when he recognised it. This man was the killer of his master! This was the man who deserved death.

Tutt Strawhan ceased to struggle. He was doomed. His end had come.

The gorilla's fingers searched for his throat. Its grip tightened. Strawhan choked and tried to tear away those terrible fingers. The blood pounded in his head. Then suddenly everything went black before his eyes.

O'Neil growled with fury when he felt the figure grow limp in his grip, then suddenly he gave a groan and without warning sagged forward and crashed on his side, his outflung arm across Strawhan's chest—

For a long while the gorilla and its victim lay there while the sun sank low in the Western sky. They lay motionless, like two dead things, then there was a faint movement. A tremor ran through Strawhan's body. He stirred, and slowly his eyelids opened.

A great weight seemed to be pressing down on him. His head was bursting. He opened his mouth to draw breath into his tortured lungs, and when he tried to swallow the pain in his throat was intense.

Dazed, and unable to comprehend where he was, and what had happened, Strawhan lay motionless. Then slowly he turned his head. A few inches away was a horrible face—the face of the Six-Gun Gorilla!

A hoarse scream burst from Strawhan's lips. He was still in the grip of the mighty animal that had made his life an agony of fear!

But the minutes dragged on, and there came no movement from O'Neil. Strawhan's heart thudded. Could it be that the gorilla was dead?

His eyes fixed on the giant body beside him, Strawhan edged inch by inch from under the long arm across his chest. A last wriggle and he was clear, and O'Neil's arm dropped limply to the sand.

Panting for breath, Strawhan staggered to his feet, then stood swaying.

"Free!" he gasped. "I'm free! I've cheated you—you fiend!"

His eyes still fixed on the still body of O'Neil, he slowly backed away, then broke into a stumbling run.

He had covered twenty yards when a shudder ran through the gorilla. There was still a spark of life in its huge body. With a great effort it raised itself, and something like a groan came from it as it saw that its prisoner was no longer there.

Slowly it turned and saw Strawhan. He was scrambling to the top of a ridge.

O'Neil's hand dropped to his gun, and he raised himself to his knees. His gun came up. His finger tightened on the trigger. Then all at once he crumpled forward.

At that moment Tutt Strawhan looked round. He saw O'Neil swaying, then a shout of triumph broke from his lips as the gorilla crashed to the ground. It was dead!

There came the roar of a gun and Strawhan's shout rose to a shrill scream. He clutched at his side, and gazed stupidly down at the blood oozing between his fingers. Then slowly he spun round and dropped face downwards.

Even in death O'Neil had triumphed. The contraction of his muscles as he had slumped forward had set off the gun, and the single bullet in the chambers had sped straight and true to the mark. The murder of Bart Masters had been avenged in strange and terrible fashion.

THE END.

Order next Tuesday's "Wizard" today, and make sure of reading the great new story, "Crispin Gaunt's Ragtime

TO STAMP COLLECTORS

Closely-set Advertisements will be inserted in WIZARD under above heading at the prepaid rate of 3d per word per insertion. Spaced Advertisements 25/- per inch per insertion.

STAMPS.—300 different, including Airmail, beautiful uncommon sets, pictorials, Colonials. You'll be delighted. Price 6d. White, Stamps, Lye, Stourbridge.

508 STAMPS free! Mozambique, Bulgaria, Roumania, Greece, Brazil, etc. 2d postage. Request approvals. E. Eastick, 22 Bankside Road, Bournemouth.

12/6 FREE. 58 stamps cataloguing 12/6, including 12 K.G. VI., Jubilees, Coronations, Abyssinia, Congo, Manchukuo, to approval applicants sending 2d. Cockrill, 13 Montrell Rd., London, S.W.2.

MANY rare stamps have been found in the "Diamond" packet, which contains approx. 1000 unsorted stamps from convents abroad. 1s 6d post free. (Abroad 2s 6d.) Beware of imitations. Nerush (Dept. W.), 68 Turnpike Lane, London, N.8.

JUBILEE Packet Free.—Goliath locomotive, allegory of Latvia, Estonia (blacksmith), Chile (Bulnes), Egypt (Fuad); packet of 50 different, old Turkey, scarce Jubilee. Ask for 50% discount approvals and enclose 2d postage. Robinson Bros. (D), Moreton, Wirral.

JUBILEES and Coronations from Gold Coast, Ceylon, Canada; Jubilee Australia; Coronations from Nigeria, New Zealand; new Colonials. Free if approvals requested. 2d postage. Hely Hutchinson, Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands.

APPROVALS.—Postage free. Excellent selection. Oliver A. Rawlings, 7, Wiseacre Croft, Shirley, Birmingham.

SPECIAL Summer Offer—Canadian Royal Visit set and 25 South America. Send 2d for approvals. Taylor Ltd., Wrea Green, Preston.

ROYAL CANADIAN VISIT PKT. FREE!

Includes a set issued to commemorate Their Majesties' Canadian visit. The Royal Family is represented by Queen Mary, King George, and the Duke of Windsor. Sets of Canadian, Australia, also a magnificent set of 20 diff. U.S.A., including portraits of President Roosevelt, George Washington, and pictorials. There are Jubilees, Coronations, also one depicting our War Memorial in London. 40 different stamps, and a fine old stamp of Queen Victoria, issued 100 years ago.